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THOROUGHBRED AND
HUNTER

WILLIAM FAWCETT'S WORKS ON SPORT

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THE DEVON AND SOMERSET STAGHOUNDS
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TURF, CHASE AND PADDOCK
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RACING IN THE OLDEN DAYS
THE CHESHIRE HUNT
ELEMENTS OF HORSEMANSHIP
THE CATTISTOCK HUNT
SADDLE-ROOM SAYINGS
Etc. Etc.

THOROUGHBRED AND HUNTER.

THEIR BREEDING, TRAINING & MANAGEMENT
FROM FOALHOOD TO MATURITY

BY

WILLIAM FAWCETT

Hunting and Racing Editor of "The Field"

Illustrated by

LIONEL EDWARDS, R.I.

With an Introduction by

SIR ALFRED PEASE, BART.

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TO
ONE WHO HAS WATCHED THE PROGRESS OF THIS
BOOK FROM INCEPTION TO COMPLETION
WITH PATIENCE, CARE AND LOYALTY,
AND WHOSE LOVE OF THE BRITISH
THOROUGHbred IS ONLY
EQUALLED BY MINE OWN
MY WIFE

IN GRATITUDE

THE title of this volume, I think, explains itself. The following chapters are simply the outcome of a good deal of personal experience gained among the stud-farms of England, Ireland and France. I have purposely not dealt with such difficult questions as pedigrees, in-breeding, or winning families, as I am ambitious enough to think that these are deserving of a separate volume.

My grateful thanks are due to the Editor of *The Field* who has allowed me to reproduce several chapters which previously appeared in that journal, and also to Mr. Lionel Edwards, R.I., who has done so much to assist me with regard to illustrations. Lastly, I must thank all the bloodstock breeders of England, many of them friends of long standing, who have given me so many joyous days in sun-lit paddock and shaded stud-farm.

WILLIAM FAWCETT

DONCASTER,
September Sales

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FOREWORD

By SIR ALFRED PEASE, Bart.

THE author of this book has made one mistake, that of asking me to write a "Foreword" to a work which deals so largely with matters connected with the Turf. I can only account for it by the fact that I am an old neighbour of his, with whom he has often discussed the subjects he deals with; for he knows that I have no claim to give any opinion on many matters connected with flat racing, which he has made his special study. Having read the volume, I feel that it was written for the great number of persons like myself who are deeply interested in the history of the evolution of the English thoroughbred, watch what he is doing on the flat, over sticks, and in the hunting-field, and who are eager to read all that experts have to tell us or to teach us.

At the outset, I had been meditating on the chapter "Is the Derby a Fair Test?" and had got into the following one, where the author compares the respective merits of Colorado and Coronach. He states that Colorado was a "beautifully balanced" horse, and I was just thinking that *that* was what probably made a good horse into the best horse, when the morning papers arrived. The first news I looked for was the winner of the Gold Cup at Ascot, and behold it was Felicitation, four-year-old, by Colorado. There are few horses perfectly balanced in action, but if you have the good fortune to ride one you feel it at once. There is a sureness and ease in all they do, which economises effort and gives them the facility to tackle uphill and downhill, and to take bends and corners which means lengths in every kind of race and spells safety across country.

As an outsider, I am more interested in spotting the combination of pace and stamina and in trying to trace its origin than in anything else connected with the Turf. It is the races of over two miles which fascinate me most. I regard the winners of such races as our greatest assets. They give us the standard by which we can judge whether we are gaining or losing ground.

When we consider the competition, the record times, and the outstanding performances of the winners and runners-up in the races of two miles and upwards, in recent years, and what we have seen at Aintree and Cheltenham, we may be sure that we have reached the highest standard yet achieved of pace and stamina. I see no reason whatever for contemplating any such experiment as a

return to an Oriental cross to increase stamina—the Oriental has done his share in a distant past in the evolution of the racehorse. The future is in the hands of the Jockey Club and of Race Committees. I agree with the author that it is a pity that there are not more of the old-fashioned two-mile races at principal meetings. They are the most interesting and the most instructive for lovers of horses and for breeders.

When we are taking stock of the position it should not be forgotten that to-day there are many more first-flight hunters which are thoroughbred, carrying weight and doing their job throughout season after season, than there ever were. There are quite a number of Brown Jacks in the hunting-field.

The author has covered the subjects which interest every class of horse-lover and breeder. He has given us a host of subjects to reflect on and a vast number of hints and instructions in a most readable form.

In so many books on racing and hunting one gets bewildered with detail, pedigrees, and analyses of theories, that one can scarcely see the wood for the trees. Here you have the great subject presented in a bird's-eye view, and each feature which matters is pointed out.

I hope that this work may achieve success, and do something to stimulate the demand that Government should recognize that horse-breeding is a matter of urgent national importance. I have long felt, as the author does, that we are disgracefully behind other countries in this respect. It is a question not only of maintaining the reputation of our horses, and the industry of breeding, and the requirements of the Army. The loss of our horses means the loss of a great deal of the character which has made us great. In the past every assistance given by the State, since the days of Queen's Plates, has borne rich fruit to the nation and to the individual, and would do so again.

As an old "has been" I give my blessing, for whatever it is worth, to this very useful and informing work.

ALFRED E. PEASE

CHAPTER I

THE THOROUGHBRED AND ITS CONFORMATION

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THE THOROUGHBRED AND ITS CONFORMATION

ENGLAND is the land of the thoroughbred. Of that there can be no possible doubt ; for wherever the thoroughbred be exported to, into whatever clime or country, it will be found that after a generation the stock deteriorates. Why this should be no one has yet satisfactorily explained, but I think that the excellence of our grass, soil and equable climate are decidedly potent factors in this beneficial state of affairs.

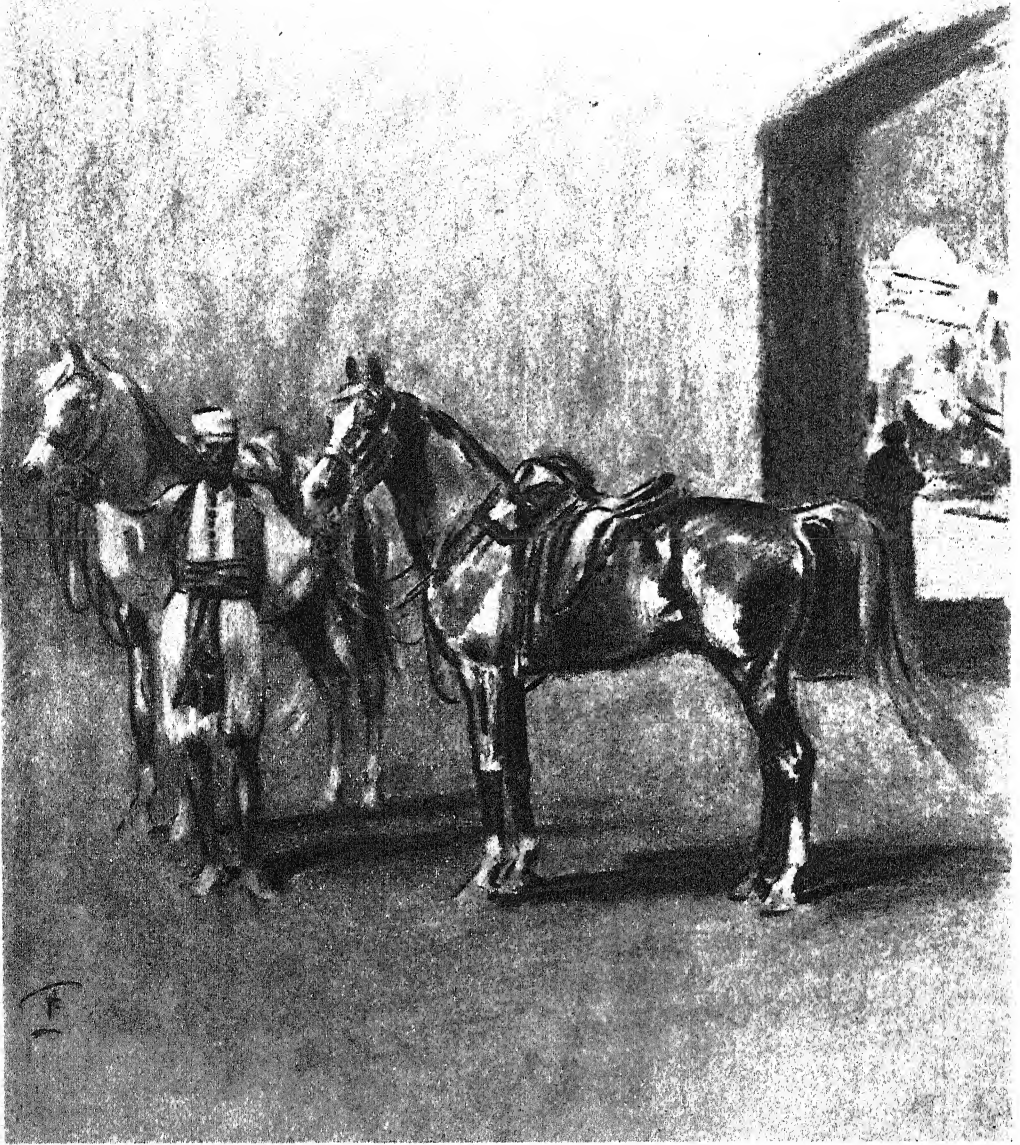
The British thoroughbred, from whence also comes the hunter, has been termed by many writers as a composite breed. But in this respect I think they err, for Britain has always been noted, ever since Roman times, for the excellence of its horses. There is no doubt that the Eastern blood which was imported during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did a great deal to revitalize the native breed, but I am one of those who have always held that far too much stress has been laid upon the value of the Eastern horse in relation to the thoroughbred.

Out of all the Arabian families in the stud-book three only now survive, the Darley Arabian, the Godolphin Arabian, and the Byerley Turk. It is true we have heard all about the wondrous performances of these imported Arabs and Barbs, but I will say without hesitation that even legendary Royal Mares would not have played any part in the history of the British Turf if there had not been a sound native stock upon which to graft the Eastern strains. After all the Markham Arabian, which created such a furore in the days of the first Stuart King, made little or no impression upon the minds of breeders in the days of wide riding-boots and slashed doublets. After all did not Gervase Markham write, " For swiftness, what nation hath brought forth that horse which hath exceeded the English ?—when the best Barbaries that ever were in their prime, I saw them over-runne by a black hobbie at Salisbury, yet that hobbie was more overrunne by a horse called Valentine, which Valentine neither in hunting nor running was ever equalled, yet was a plain bred English horse both by syre and dam." I have always had a great respect for that worthy Gervase's judgment, as after all he was a practical man who knew

what he was writing about even though he may have been imbued with a certain amount of patriotic admiration for home products ; and certainly the horse which he describes as " the true English horse, him I mean that is bred under a good cline on firme ground, in a pure temperature, is of tall stature and large proportions ; his head, though not so fine as either the Barberie's or the Turke's yet is lean, long, and well fashioned ; his crest is hie, only subject to thickness if he be stoned, but if he be gelded then it is firm and strong ; his chyne is straight and broad, and all his limbs are large, leane, flat, and excellently jointed," cannot be a bad one, for when it has a " leane head, a good chyne and flat legs," these naturally are the attributes of good conformation.

I think we may take it then that the English thoroughbred owes a heavy horse debt to the East ; but that debt surely has been amply repaid, for the thoroughbred is the mainstay of every light horse throughout the whole world. That he played a prominent part in the origin of the hackney, the hunter, and the hack cannot be disputed ; and no country which produces the horse in any numbers, except Arabia—although the horse-breeding tribes have been decimated and ruined by the introduction of the motor car and the rifle—appears able to do without importations from these islands to improve and maintain their own native strains.

The horse's sphere of usefulness has not yet waned, and those who aver that the motor and the internal-combustion engine can altogether take its place should read the late Lord Haig's dispatches for 1918, and thank their lucky stars that there were good horses and bold men to ride them in the most critical period of Britain's history. The horse may supplement the engine, or the engine the horse, but neither can supplant the other ; and so long as there is a demand for the thoroughbred from all parts of the world, then we must have racing, as the turf is the mainstay of the thoroughbred and the only true method of testing its merits. But if racing is to go on then there must be ceaseless activity in the stud-farms of Great Britain. Improvement, if we are to realize to the full the heritage which has been bequeathed to us by our forefathers, must be the aim of every breeder in the land. And surely that improvement can only be attained by perfecting the conformation of the thoroughbred so that the production of the thoroughbred horse is not hurt or harmed. Now as regards conformation it cannot be said that all breeders have the same in view. If they have the same ultimate object they certainly have not the same ideas about getting there.



THE ARAB

We may indeed read with care and diligence every author and leading authority from Gervase Markham to Professor J. B. Robertson, but it is certainly fair to say that the more we imbibe from these deep founts of knowledge the more fogged we become, for it is not an exaggeration to say that there is hardly one point in which any two can be said to be in complete agreement.

And yet in spite of this divergence of opinion, I have only once heard a man express the opinion that conformation did not count at all in the good points of the thoroughbred or hunter. I must admit that his judgment never weighed very heavily with me, and the only time I ever visited his stud it weighed considerably less, a fact I mentioned to this breeder who replied by chasing me off the place with a shot-gun! But the truth, which every breeder certainly believes in, is that make and shape is a certain and very valuable attribute to the thoroughbred's fame. Look at the glorious lines that Bend Or, Diamond Jubilee, and Prince Palatine possessed. Everyone was a classic winner, and although horses are not machines, nor can their merits be determined accurately by races won, that wonderful conformation certainly played a prominent part, for surely all movement, except that caused by gravitation, is effected by muscular contraction.

Conformation must not be confused or mixed up with nerves or nervous stimulus, or courage or temper, or temperament, these are factors which stand out by themselves; but I think that good sound conformation assists a horse to get its head first past the post in nine cases out of ten.

It is impossible to compare the racehorse with other animals of speed, for it is arguing upon unsound premises to do so. Even in comparing the racehorse or hunter with the greyhound, the antelope, the lynx, the cheetah, and even the hare, it is unfair to do so, as the only point in which these can be compared is that the feet and limbs are longer than in slow animals. The dog and cat for example are short from knee to hock, but the antelope is long. Which then are we to follow? Antelopes have often to turn, crouch, and double in a bare existence for life, while the racehorse or hunter has to travel upon a more or less smooth surface with a man on his back to guide him. Comparison is impossible, as it is with horses of strength. The latter are broad; and to be proportionally strong means breadth everywhere; and breadth means weight, which is not desirable in speed. And the limbs are longer in the speedy than in the strong, besides

which, bone and sinew and muscle are finer in texture and tougher in fibre.

I think, then, that we may take it that the general proportions of the thoroughbred are dependable upon the comparative dimensions of his different parts. The manner in which all these various parts work together can best be seen at a distance—during a race, for example; but upon looking at a horse for the first time it is as well not to make too hasty a judgment, as many a horse which I have admired at close quarters in its box has proved to be, when out, a clumsy, ill-balanced brute with the action of a hackney, and the conformation of a wheeler of a coach!

Every breeder should indeed strive to evolve a horse whose conformation equals its action—a difficult task indeed, but one which should provide a sufficient stimulus to this desirable end. This can only be attained by mating the right stallion with the best stamp of mare, which will reproduce the best from their respondent “nick-ing” lines, or else, perhaps by atavism, or maybe by using a staying horse upon a mare which comes from a sprinting family. This was done by mating Gainsborough and the Tetrarch mare, Tetrabbazia; and the produce, Singapore, not only won the St. Leger, but also at stud “let down” into a beautiful horse in every way worthy to compare with the so-called giants of the not so mighty past.

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CHAPTER II

LAYING OUT A STUD-FARM

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LAYING OUT A STUD-FARM

THERE is no hobby, few pursuits, or fewer commercial enterprises which hold quite the same fascination, the glamour of hard-won success, or the never-ending possibilities, as bloodstock- or hunter-breeding. It is quite possible that the science of breeding horses, possesses as many charms as racing itself, for in the quiet of cosy paddocks, ankle-deep in nutritious lush grass, the breeder can see his own theories working out, and who knows but the foal which so gaily trips beside its dam, may not triumph with silk on its back at Epsom, or Doncaster, or Ascot, or when hounds run their hardest. Nay more, the colt or filly may prove to be another Sceptre, or a Pretty Polly ; perhaps it may be acclaimed by a thousand throats as an equine hero of the calibre of Ormonde, or Flying Fox, or Gainsborough, or perchance a Red Cloud or Handley Cross.

Who knows, as the Spaniards say, but these things may come to pass, especially if one has faith in one's own judgment. But the home paddocks, where your mares will drowse many a sun-lit day away, must be well chosen, upon the right sort of soil, and deep in those grasses which swell the vein and feed the young life steadily growing within. And at the stud-farm itself there must be roomy boxes which catch the sun, a well-sheltered yard in a place where draughts and cold bleak winds are noticeable by their absence. So the laying-out of a stud and its encircling paddocks demands the most careful consideration, for no great winners will be bred, except by good luck perhaps, in buildings which are badly built and exposed to every cutting wind, nor will mare or foal thrive on paddocks short of grass, and whose subsoil is cold and sticky. It is, therefore, most important that the boxes should have a southern outlook, for in the winters which England knows, as much sun as possible is desirable. The main buildings of the stud-farm should consist of the brood-mares boxes, granaries, hay-loft, feed-houses, and living accommodation for the staff, with the stud-groom's house within easy reach. Some distance away, out of sight of the mares' paddocks, if possible, the stallion-box and covering-yard may be advantageously placed,

and a very good adjunct to a stud-farm is a large construction—it can be built either of wood, brick, or corrugated iron, the latter being the cheapest, though not the most durable—like a riding-school, where both yearlings and mares can be exercised in cold or very wet weather. It is as well to arrange the boxes in the form of a square, or at least on three sides of one, the north being devoted to the hay-loft, granaries, feeding-boxes and the hospital-room, while the rest of the space may be taken up by boxes.

And here I think it advisable for every stud to have at least three special foaling-boxes, which should be considerably larger than the other boxes, at least 16 feet; and these boxes should be placed with a feeding-room between them, and it is, of course, absolutely essential that each possess a small sliding-door through which the attendant can watch the foaling mare, without going into either box. This is a most necessary precaution, as the mare due to foal can make her arrangements without being disturbed, for surely many a right good foal has been lost owing to the gross carelessness of some ignorant man who disturbed the anxious mare at what is both a critical and painful period.

Here we must consider the building, roofing and paving of the boxes. I have seen so many studs so ill-arranged that it has always been a wonder to me that any animal could live in them at all, in the midst of such draughts, lack of ventilation and prevalent and unforgettable odour of ammonia! I suppose mares did do well under those conditions, as the rare horses of old did in their hot, dark, gloomy caverns which did duty for boxes in the days when John Scott stabled many of his famous winners in stalls and bails, and the highest fee for a first-class stallion was 35 guineas, and hunters were not clipped.

But if you would see your mares happy—and no animal, unless it be a dog, awakens quite that receptive glow of feeling in the heart as does a horse—you first of all must see that they are comfortably housed. And housing, whether it be for human beings or animals, is a dry theme, but a very necessary one withal. It is questionable, indeed, how many stud-owners have really given the question of stables any serious thought. How many have thought of situation, light, air and drainage? Yet nothing could be more vital to the mare's health. Whether you possess one mare or twenty the same broad rules, tinctured with common sense and proven by facts, must be observed. We in this twentieth century of ours, despite the pangs of regret so frequently cast back to the days that were, can

congratulate ourselves that our stable hygiene has improved beyond all measure. Yet we had to learn from the Americans, who taught us that a clean, cool stable with plenty of light and air was a much healthier place to keep a horse in than the dank, stuffy tombs in which our ancestors used to stable their unfortunate animals. First, then, as to site and position. Here are two important points to consider—ground and aspect. Above all, the ground must be dry, for any moist soil which holds water, such as clay, should be avoided like the plague. Your boxes will always be damp and your mares always coughing if you build on a poor soil, so try to find a foundation which consists of gravel or sand, though I think the latter best, even if in writing of sand I am reminded of the biblical parable !

If gravel is not available then you must take steps, under expert advice, to make the foundation as dry and deep as possible. And in planning your stable-yard see to it that it is open to the air on every side, and not a confined jumble of buildings in some stuffy hollow. By being "open to the air" I do not mean to say that the boxes should be built in a bleak, exposed position with winds sweeping round the corners and rustling under eaves and slates. No ! That is a stable-yard in which no horse will ever be fit, so I should advise you to choose your stables with a southerly aspect ; or if you think that this will mean too much sunlight for your horses, place the yard in a south-westerly position with windows in both sides. Those of us who have studied the question of stable hygiene cannot stress too strongly the importance of comfortable stables and the beneficial effects of sunshine. In planning your stable-yard you should do so in the fashion of a three-sided square with one side left open. Some people do not care for big boxes upon the grounds that they are cold ; but surely it is not a great deal of trouble to add another rug ! I have known some nasty accidents occur in small boxes, and I think a horse is happier and does much better in a large box, for roomy boxes are sweeter and cleaner than smaller ones, and not so redolent of ammonia and other stable smells.

Now we must decide as to the fashion in which the boxes should be built—a prosaic, material theme, I know, but one very vital to the health of the horse. But before deciding this it is interesting—and also, by the way, a potent factor to health—to realize how much air a horse consumes. That great authority upon all matters pertaining to the horse, Capt. Hayes, is of the opinion that 1,500 cu. ft. is a reasonable average in boxes. But is this quite enough, even for a box that measures 12 ft. by 12 ft. by 10½ ft. ? I do not think so, and I

would much prefer a box 14 ft. by 15 ft. by 12 ft. which gives us 2,500 cubic feet, which is ample for the best horse "wot ever was foaled." But a horse will do well on some 1,700 cu. ft., provided, of course, there is a free channel for ventilation in the box.

How should that box be built? Particular care should be exercised in this direction so that the horse may obtain the maximum of comfort, warmth and health, with the minimum of discomfort. I think—and I hold this opinion after the inspection of very many studs—that it is better that each box should open independently and be built in one. The doorways of the box itself should be wide, with rounded door-posts, and it is an important point that it must be high, some 6 ft. 5 in. The door itself should open outwards and have no projections about it which are likely to injure the horse in any way. In Yorkshire, that land of the horse—do they not say, "Shake a bridle over a Yorkshireman's grave and he will get up and steal a horse"?—they say that a mare which knocks herself "agin a door, will likins knock a yuk off," so it is as well to have the doorway as large as possible.

And the door itself should be faced with tin or zinc (this will prevent a horse biting and learning other evil habits) and made with a top flap which opens easily and can be secured by a hasp and staple in the opposite wall. Perhaps it is unnecessary to add that there should be no projecting pieces of iron. It is most important, too, that every care should be exercised in leading a horse through doorways; there should be no looking round, jobbing in the mouth or shouting. Rather lead the mare on with a firm hold of bridle-rein or head-collar rope, and see to it that there is no likelihood of the horse being frightened in any way.

My personal experience tells me that a bad accident coming through a back door may mean a shock to the horse's system, from which its nerves may never recover. And here we must for a brief moment consider the all-important question of roofing, which to my mind, only consists of two possible kinds—red tiles or brown thatch. Surely there is no more cheerful or heart-warming sight than a well-gravelled stable-yard roofed in red, warm tiles! Let us leave the picturesque. From a material point of view, flat, ridged roofing more than proves its worth by its utility; and though it be expensive, you will find in the long run that it is very durable. Thatch—are there any of the old thatches left now?—has the advantage of being cool in summer and warm in winter, but it is liable to require renewal rather frequently. If you decide on thatching

to roof your stables then you should see that wire netting is placed over it to prevent birds, rats and mice from destroying or making homes for their numerous offspring.

And then what of the floor? Of what material shall we compose it? Some pin their faith to silica bricks, others to square whinstone sets, others to all sorts, kinds and descriptions of patent flooring, grooved, roughed and levelled. Even to-day in some of the old-fashioned stables you will find cobbled floors built upon a big slope—so that their unfortunate occupant is always standing up-hill; but if I were you I should not advise a visit to these stables unless you wish to be poisoned by a liberal dose of ammonia and a stench that reaches as high and is very nearly as potent as that into which the long-suffering Job was thrown. I cannot imagine how some of the old-time hunters survived in stables of this description, which certainly must have been smelt long before they were seen. By far away and the best form of flooring to use is concrete made of good hard Portland cement, with the floor made as one, not in slabs, and on a good foundation of broken brick, with grooved lines and a certain amount of “roughing” to prevent a mare from getting “cast” or slipping up. Drains—at least those inside—should be non-existent. But surely I hear some horrified sanitary expert exclaim, “But my dear good sir, what of your drainage? Where will the urine and other waste matter flow to?” And here, my good drainage expert, is your answer. Never have I tried to explain matters upon paper; rather my experience has been founded through years of visiting stables in practically every country in Europe. No greater mistake can be made in any stable than by having inside drains—those abominations which prove as tiresome to both man and master as the *pons asinorum* to the inky-faced denizen of the lower school—which are placed in the centre of the box, and which require emptying every week, flushing every day, and repairing every year.

Interior drains are more trouble in a stable than they are worth. But in saying this, we must make this provision, that every morning all the wet bedding and droppings are removed, and the box is thoroughly brushed out with a stiff yard-broom. At intervals the box may be thoroughly swilled out with fresh water and a strong disinfectant—such as Milton—though of course, it should be allowed three days to dry before being used again. Drainless boxes of the very best type are used in many studs, and one has only to see the health of the mares, foals, and yearlings, to prove that the

absence of drainage is beneficial to their health. A master's eye, and one may almost say nose, will see that any stable is cleaned and that grooms are doing their work properly. Veterinary surgeons may be required in the stable now and then, but sanitary experts—never.

And now as to manger and hay-rack. I for one find joy in saying that the old-fashioned hay-rack, generally placed in the darkest corner, has, in any up-to-date stable, been relegated to the limbo of lost things. And a very good thing, too, as the horse not only ate unnaturally, but hay-seeds fell into its eyes, and a groom, unless he was carefully watched, never removed the unwanted hay but generally packed the rack tighter and tighter, with new hay on top of old. If you like you may use a hay-net, or you may place the required ration in some convenient corner, or you may—and this to my mind is the best plan of all—build a hay-rack upon the same level as the manger.

I must confess that I am not greatly enamoured of the scheme in making a horse eat from the ground level. There are those who argue that this is the natural way of feeding—and so it is in the paddock, but not in the stable, where an adoption of this scheme will generally have the effect of making the horse eat his bedding or pick up other undesirable things. Arguing, then, upon these premises, both hay-rack and manger should be of glazed earthenware built into the side of the box, and should slope outwards with no room underneath them, so that there is no danger of a horse hitting *his* knee. The manger should, incidentally, be rounded inside, thereby making it easy to clean out and keep in good condition.

We must now deal with the lighting of stables and the colour of the walls. Everyone will admit that light is a great aid to cleanliness—is there not an old proverb in the North, “Where theer’s dark theer’s muck”?—and dirty corners are ruthlessly exposed if a good system of lighting and colouring are employed. And what sort of colouring should be used? Some people have their boxes tiled with white tiles, and very smart these look, too—until the sun strikes them and they nearly blind both horse and man. Others pin their faith to whitewash, but I think that both tiles and whitewash have too glaring an effect upon any horse’s eyes; and if you do not want that resultant strain you will find that by far and away the best method is to tar your boxes half-way up, and then use either yellow ochre paint or whitewash in which yellow ochre has been mixed in proportion of one to three. This method—and each box should be painted

at the end of every foaling season—effectually prevents any feeling of blindness through glare, is soft and pleasing to the eye, and, most important of all, is durable and assists greatly in cleanliness, which we are assured by the Scriptures is next to godliness. There is no better disinfectant than tar ; and if the yellow ochre is used every spring you will find that the method which I have prescribed is cheaper and more durable than all the tiles which ever came out of smoking ovens at Stoke-on-Trent.

As to ventilation, it is absolutely necessary that you should provide two windows fairly high up in the box, for I am one of those people who are heartily in agreement with the opinion of that very eminent authority, the late Capt. Hayes, that a stable window should be open night and day. A box should never be stuffy ; there should be none of that “fuggy” cut-into-it-with-a-jack-knife, over-warm atmosphere when you enter it, nor any smell “fit to knock you down.” But there will be none of these things if you have ventilating shafts so that the incoming currents of air are broken, and distributed, while the entrance and exit of God’s own ether is checked as little as possible.

Air bricks, which are within the reach of everyone’s purse, should be inserted near the ground and towards the top of the box, care being taken to prevent draughts as much as possible. If stables are cold or draughty you will never have your stock free from coughs, and for that matter a veterinary surgeon will never be away from the yard.

Of the other appointments of the yard—the wash-house, the feed-house, and foaling-boxes—a few words are necessary. The feed-house should not be too far from the main block of stabling, and should be dry and watertight. The contents should consist of a zinc-lined corn bin, a winnowing-machine, a mill for crushing oats, and a chopping and chaff-cutting machine. The winnowing-machine should be used when you obtain your oats in bulk ; and here let me say that oats should be crushed when they are required, not before, as is the case with many a groom. In the wash-house there should be an ample supply of hot and cold water and some form of heating—firestove or hot pipes—where tackle and rugs may be dried. It may be perhaps unnecessary to insist that both these places should always be kept as clean as a dairy, with well-scoured floors and a sweet smell about them.

It is most beneficial for any stud to possess a tan exercise gallop where yearlings can be taught to use their legs and shoulders ; and

it is preferable to have this gallop slightly up hill and if possible circular. For many years now I have been an advocate also for having a sand bath attached to the stud, for my experience teaches me that horses love to roll about in the sand and this generally proves itself to be excellent for their health. It certainly is for yearlings, who thus get an opportunity of stretching their limbs in unfettered ease.

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CHAPTER III

PADDOCKS AND PASTURAGE

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IT is no use attempting to breed racehorses or hunters unless you possess plenty of grass which lies upon a dry subsoil.

Breeders often make a great mistake in imagining that horses require rich, strong land such as fattens cattle, but this is clearly a mistake, as the best land for breeding thoroughbreds on is old-established upland grass which has been well drained, such as one finds at Sledmere, Mentmore, Worksop Manor, and other famous studs. And the quality of the grass? This is even more important than the situation, as horses will not eat strong rank-growing grass, but prefer the fine closer-growing herbage which grows luxuriously and feels to the human foot as a deep green carpet would. But to attain that herbage is no easy matter, for its growth must be regular and it must not be choked with the ranker-growing kinds, or by weeds and thistles.

In establishing a stud it is no bad plan to have every paddock well harrowed, and the rougher spots torn up; in fact the severest harrow to be found should be employed, as the chances are that the top herbage is underlaid by many generations of dead grasses through which the new young shoots in vain try to struggle. So many breeders seem to think that nutritious, health-giving, bone-making grass grows by itself; but it does not, and weeds are more harmful in grassland than arable, for not only are they detrimental to the finer growing grasses, but also less conspicuous.

After harrowing the paddocks well, where it is proposed that brood-mare and foal and yearling will find a sunlit home, they should be left until the spring, when the Cambridge roller may be employed. The roller should be used where the grasses are inclined to grow coarse and heavy: continuous rolling gets rid of them by squeezing the big, coarse roots and so causing decay. These decaying roots in their turn form food for the roots of the finer grasses; and so by one process you get rid of what you do not want and encourage what you are aiming for. But—and this is a word of kindly warning—do not roll sooner than you can help after harrowing, as the harrow teeth opens the surface of the soil, which thus gains the free advantage

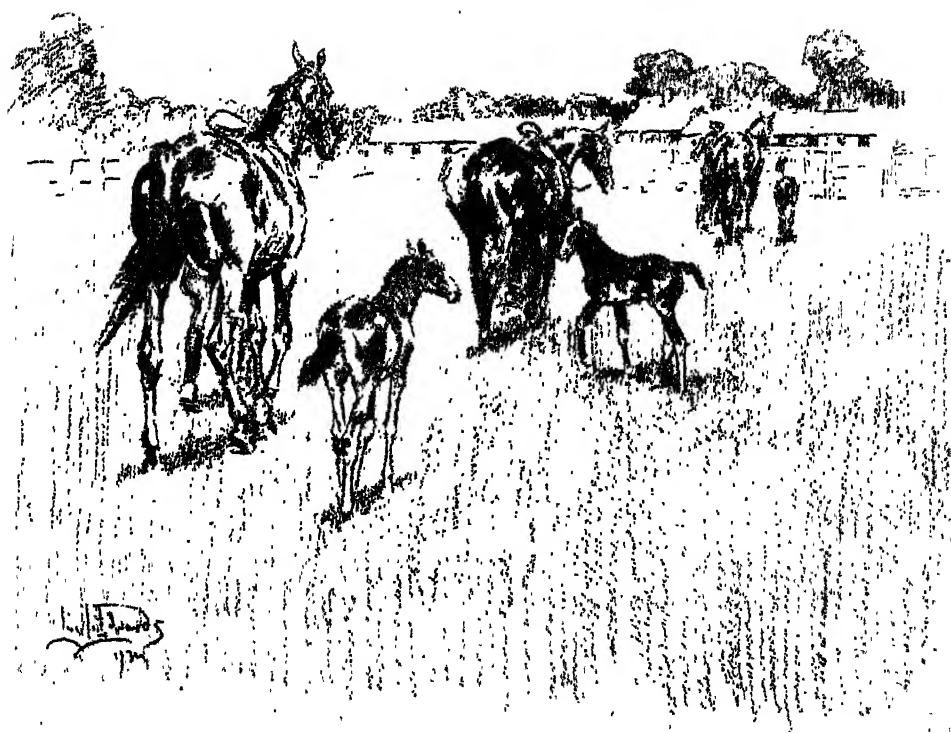
of sun, rain and wind, besides, as I have said, pulling out the rank, old and dead herbage.

That is one method of cleaning a pasture and establishing good herbage ; but you may with advantage graze the paddocks bare with cattle and sheep before Christmas. This will be of immense benefit to them, because it will do a great deal to remove some of the old rough clumps, which will probably give you great difficulty in getting rid of. If such is the case then leave a few rough Irish bullocks in the field, scatter the clumps with salt, and continue until the bullocks are forced to eat them up.

Having now rolled and harrowed your paddocks, the next question which arises is, to manure or not to manure ? It is one upon which the experts are inclined to differ, but it is perhaps safer to state that artificial manures should not be used to any great extent, as they stimulate the land to an undesirable extent and are, moreover, very costly. In giving advice upon this point I would say experiment with a few manures until you find which suits the land best. Although you may cry with James Pigg that " muck's your man ! " there is no doubt that lime (very efficacious if supplied by the landlord rather than the tenant), kainit, and basic slag are the three manures which are most suitable for land upon which the thoroughbred is intended to be raised.

If the land is inclined to be heavy, some 5 to 7 cwt. of basic slag put on in November every fourth year is most beneficial ; and on limestone gravel land a light dressing of very rotten farmyard manure every few years is excellent, although see to it that it is well tossed about and not merely laid in heaps whereby it soaks one portion and leaves the remainder high and dry and unfruitful. There is no doubt that lime is beneficial on any kind of soil, and may always be applied with advantage after a dressing of farmyard manure. Dressings of chalk too holds moisture and prevents grass from drying up, but chalk is only suitable for sandy land and is generally difficult to obtain.

I have said that horses—be they hunters or racehorses—thrive best on dry, warm, soil ; and it is certainly no use anyone thinking that their bloodstock will do as well on cold, wet land, as it not only means that everything in the place has to be brought in at night so they can be somewhere dry, but I think it tends to coarsen and make porous bone. Of course the drier the soil, the longer the period that mares and foals can run out day and night ; and although in very wet weather it is desirable to bring the young stock in, as



By H. H. H. to the manager of the B.

When the mare and foal have not too far to be taken backwards or forwards.

PADDOCKS AND PASTURAGE

"Then the mares and foals have not too far to be taken backwards and forwards"

they poach the ground when left out, this does not mean that it will be necessary always. It is desirable also that there should be plenty of shade in the paddocks, which may well be belted by oak, ash and thorn—the fairies' passport and a sure sign to the horse-lover that bloodstock will grow and thrive wherever they are—which will protect the paddocks from cold easterly winds. But see that no trees or branches overhang the paddocks as this is courting disaster; for the danger of your valuable stock being struck by lightning is too apparent to be explained.

And now having explained the question of pasturage, let us say a few words as to the formation of the paddocks themselves. Near to the home buildings there should be provided one or two small paddocks, well protected from the cold winds, these being required for the mares immediately after foaling. The other paddocks should be placed so that those needed for the brood-mares are close to the home; then the mares and foals have not too far to be taken backwards and forwards. These paddocks might each be five acres in extent. Going farther afield, the yearling boxes and paddock should next be erected. The boxes should be in one row only, facing due south, the whole row containing no more than twelve. Some people prefer to have only a few boxes in each yearling paddock, so that, in case of illness or an epidemic, isolation may be given.

Yearling paddocks should be more spacious than the brood-mare paddocks, six to eight acres being none too large for them. In laying out the paddocks, it is essential that they are well and carefully railed all round with three lines of strong rails at least 5 ft. high on strong posts. A good way to fix the posts is to dig a square hole about 18 in. deep. Hold the post upright, and put a wide ring of concrete round the bottom of it about 6 in. thick, having first charred that part of the post which will be underground. Fill in with earth and ram it down well. If this is done in dry weather, the rains will swell the earth tight up against the post. This way of fixing the posts is the most rigid and durable known, and the mares cannot bend them out of truth. All gates should be strong and durable, painted white, and they should all have padlocks, as should all boxes. At the gateways most in use it is advisable to put down some broken-up bricks or cinders to prevent puddling, which otherwise will happen in wet weather and winter-time. It is also desirable to avoid all right-angled corners and to have them rounded off.

In a big stud it may be necessary to have one or two very large paddocks for the barren mares and mares as they are weaned from

their foals. Brood-mare boxes should not be less than 14 ft. by 14 ft., and yearling boxes 12 ft. by 12 ft. Stallion-boxes require to be much larger—16 ft. by 16 ft. or even more is none too large for a stallion. The attendant requires plenty of room to get about in a stallion-box, and it is more restful for the stallion to have plenty of room about him.

I am a great advocate of clean, fresh ground to grow horses on. Nothing is worse than to go on using the same ground year after year. Horses take out of the ground the same kind of grasses, always the sweetest, and return the same chemical compounds through their manure. A change of pasture should be made periodically by grazing the ground with cattle, well salting the rough grasses left by the horses, which will then be readily eaten by the cattle, or better still, mowing it off periodically. The cattle may be interchanged with sheep, for, as the saying goes, "A sheep's foot is golden." In a rich man's stud, where money is no object, I would advise giving all the paddock's a year's rest. To do this and carry on the stud, it would be necessary to have two complete sets of paddocks and use them every alternate year. By this process the horses would always be getting the full nutriment out of the rested grass, and the benefit of this will show itself in their offspring. Where such a system cannot be carried out, cattle must be put on the paddocks, which can best be done on the in-and-out principle, whilst the stud is going on. For this purpose polled cattle only should be used, such as Red Polls, Aberdeen Angus, or the hardy Galloways. All these breeds are hornless and so cannot hurt the mares.

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CHAPTER IV
CHOOSING THE RIGHT MARES

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IT is the tritest of truisms that the whole success of a stud is founded upon the mares which find a home in its paddocks. And I would say to anyone starting a racehorse or hunter stud, that too many mares at the outset is a grave mistake. From six to eight mares at first are quite sufficient, and others may be added as the years roll by, if a policy of "weeding out," whereby old mares are eliminated and young fresh ones substituted, is generally adopted.

So many studs are filled with useless non-winner-producing mares, which will never return winners for course, show-ring, or field, that I am impelled to tell the tale of how I once visited a famous stud, and in a paddock, with the stud-groom, saw four mares which had never thrown a winner in their lives. I observed to the stud-groom that they looked well—one could hardly say anything else! His reply was terse and to the point. "Yes, sir, look well—but you and I know better, sir!!" And full well we did; for how many mares there must be at stud which never produce winners, and others whose quota to the victorious bed-roll consists of selling-platers, or moderate hurdlers? This type of mare appears and reappears continually at the sales and can generally be purchased cheaply enough because of their proved inability in the paddocks. Some of these mares are handsome too and well-made, but an examination of their pedigrees generally proves that they came from a family by no means noted for producing good winners.

This class of mare should be avoided like the plague. But I am not going to plunge into a bath of exhaustive figures, or a digest of the female lines, but rather tell you of a simpler plan which I was told of long years ago when I first became a devotee of the thoroughbred—not that my love was not inherent from my Yorkshire birth.

When the sales are coming on and the preliminary catalogue is published, the pedigree of any mare which reads as likely to suit you should be examined to thirty-two quarterings, or even perhaps up to sixty-four. And while doing this, note the best blood—Touchstone, Birdcatcher, Brown Bess and Queen Mary, together

with the number of good animals that occur in the pedigree, and how closely they are related to the mare herself. It is by no means a bad plan to take three coloured pencils, blue, red, and green, and underline each classic animal with the blue, each handicap winner with the red, and the remainder with the green. After eliminating such events as selling- and hurdle-races, add up your total findings ; if the green predominates over the blue and red, then put the mare out of your mind. This is a good way of proving the blood value of a mare and her chances of breeding winners. It is certainly better than buying haphazard, or because a mare takes your fancy in the sale ring, or on the recommendation of a stud-groom in search for "luck pence."

A few first-class mares are occasionally to be found at the sales—to dissolve partnerships or for profit—but this class of mare as a rule runs into very high figures. Nevertheless, for those desiring the very best and are prepared to pay the price, this is the right kind of mare, and should be bought, as they seldom come into the open market. They are generally mares that have bred one or more high-class racehorses, and sometimes classic winners, or are own sisters to proved high-class racehorses or classic winners themselves, or winners of other great races, or of hunting parentage, and, above all, are of undeniably good-running pedigrees. The compulsory sale of an established stud offers a good chance of picking up high-class brood-mares, and if the stud has been exceptionally successful, it is time to harden your heart and stretch your pocket to buy some of them, as these chances occur seldom and must not be allowed to pass.

Many racing owners successfully breed their own stock. For instance, there is Lord Derby's stud, with priceless mares in it, and Lord Rosebery's with many lines of blood that the public have little chance of acquiring. I mention these two particularly, as they are of long standing, and go back to some of the most successful strains of years ago. There are many private studs belonging to racing men of more recent dates, such as Lord Woolavington, Lord Astor, and several others ; but they have had to be built up as and when suitable mares could be obtained.

But assuming that a dozen mares have been picked out, the next thing to do is to look them over in the flesh at the sales, and see if their racing outline and general conformation come up to your general expectations. And how opinions differ, too ! I have often wondered, when looking over brood-mares, which is really the most

important—the value of proved racing blood, or excellent make and shape. Certainly many famous mares when they went to stud, never threw anything as good as their illustrious selves, although their racing make and shape was generally all that it should be. But it is probable that Sceptre, Pretty Polly, Diadem and her costly daughter Dian, had had most of their “nature” taken away during their racecourse careers, and what is more tolerably certain is the fact that many a famous mare went to the paddocks possessing few, if any, of the attributes of a brood-mare.

As to conformation, from both a racing and hunting point of view then, it is absolutely essential that the chosen brood-mare should possess quality, with no coarseness about her: one which has good balance, straight-dropped hind-legs, with big, well-defined hocks and plenty of length from hip to hock, besides power behind the saddle. Perfection will not be found, but there are also three most important essentials which every brood-mare should have: width over the hips—narrow mares are never good brood-mares—a feminine appearance about the head, and a vast belly. The latter is the most important of all, for I would rather breed from a spindle-shanked “dippy”-backed mare with a good, deep belly than one with good bone, a short back, and sparse, pinched-in belly. In considering a mare as a breeding proposition she must have all the attributes of the female, and a big belly is the first thing in any breeding female.

And it is also necessary that the mare has good joints, clean, flat bone, and no lumber or defects about her. Are not faults in the parent extraordinarily apt to reappear in a worse form in the progeny? Foals are horribly apt to combine the bad points of both parents and to omit the good ones; hence it is surely better to breed from two parents with fair conformation everywhere, than to put a horse with good shoulders but bad hocks, to a mare straight in front, shelly, but who is well hocked. My experience tells me that in all probability you will get a straight-shouldered, shelly, weak-hind-legged foal, which will probably develop into an angular yearling, whose destiny will probably be the *abattoirs* of Belgium now there are no hansom-cabs left!

As to height this does not denote size in strength, but an ideal thoroughbred or hunter brood-mare should not be less than 15.2 to 15.3 hh., with 8 in. of bone below the knee. (Mares which are on the leg generally throw leggy foals which grow taller than their dam, and never come to hand till four-year-old days dawn.) If this

conformation is studied with care, added to the knowledge that the racing value of past ancestry is still prepotent, then the best advice is to go in and buy, and if necessary exceed your limit for one or two good brood-mares which will prove to be more beneficial than a moderate dozen which go on producing selling-platers and worthless hunters with monotonous regularity.

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CHAPTER V
MANAGEMENT OF BROOD-MARES

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IT is very plain to many of us who have studied this question that in breeding any type of horse great strides have been made for the better during the last quarter of a century. There is, however, much to be done and more to be learned even yet. Frequently I have seen mares at a stud with layers of fat covering them, and although their coats shone like those of show-ring hackneys, it was plain that they were in too soft a condition for the arduous task of motherhood. A brood-mare, be it racehorse or hunter, must be in a good physical condition to bear a good foal, and not as thin as the proverbial rail with lack-lustre coat, gaunt ribs and ragged hips, as I have seen mares more than once in paddocks where there was barely enough grass to fatten a rabbit ! Once I saw a collection of brood-mares, all in foal, at a stud which was perched eyrie-like on a mountain, and it was indeed a sorry sight. As the proprietor afterwards went into an asylum it is scarcely necessary to add that the winners he bred were upon a par with his mentality !

And then again memory provides me with the breeder who denied his brood-mares water but allowed them as much new milk as they liked to drink. There may have been something in his theory, as the proportion of first-class winners from this particular stud was very large, but I never cared for the method, holding, perhaps in my ignorance, that it is better not to strive against nature. Is there not a line of Horace's which aptly illustrates this point ?

The cardinal principle of keeping brood-mares in good condition—and one must realize that she is carrying another life as well—is that the mare must be fed in a manner which will prove to be of the best advantage to herself and her offspring. But though food is half the battle, such important attributes as climate, rainfall, water-supply and the geological formation are all accessories to the ultimate breeding of good winners. And if all these desirable advantages are to hand, luck will still play a potent part. What would Lord Derby's stud have been like without the matronly services of Canterbury Pilgrim ? Nor would the late King Edward have been able to make fresh Turf history had it not been for that sterling matron

Perdita II. And as is related in a later portion of this book, Lord Rosebery owed the successful foundation of his stud to Gas ; and Lady James Douglas was rendered yeoman service by that winner-producing mare Jessica, the whole of whose progeny, I believe, won races on the turf. But luck or good fortune, the French idiom *le bon chance* expresses more readily my exact meaning, is a by-blow of Fate, over which we have no control whatever.

What so many breeders disregard is the fact that all the factors of good climate, grass and so on, should influence the mare for the foal's general benefit, while their further use is to act as handmaids to the impulse of growth that is born with the foal, which will, it is to be hoped, grow gradually and evenly at every point, instead of shooting up in one portion of its body at the expense of the other.

If this fact be firmly engrafted upon the breeder's mind then the battle is half won already, especially as the first step towards helping the foal is to regard it upon the day of foaling as having lived eleven months. So that the general health of the foal may not suffer, this period may be well sub-divided into three distinct portions : 1. While still in foetus when, of course, it depends entirely upon the mare. 2. During the first six months of foalhood, when the foal depends largely upon its mother's milk, but can also pick about in the paddock and boxes itself. 3. After it is weaned.

If these three facts were more readily grasped by breeders, I think there would be less complaints about barren mares ; for the cause of barrenness is not in the majority of cases due to the stallion. Sterility or impotence in a stallion is soon discovered, but we still await the scientist who can tell us why mares are not fruitful !

Of course, owing to the horse's birthday being on January 1st—a rule that I for one am bold enough to suggest has more disadvantages than advantages—it is necessary to arrange for the mares to drop their foals, as soon after January as possible ; but I have known some April and May foals which won Turf eminence, and could make light of both weight and distance, which seems to prove to some extent at least, that we might possibly be able to rejuvenate our staying lines if the thoroughbred's birthday was once more upon May 1st, as it was in the early days of the Turf, when vitality-sapping two-year-old races were not even dreamed of.

As soon as it is evident that the mare is safely in foal, she should be fed well on good sweet hay, with a feed of oats—about 8 to 9 lbs. is a fair ration—both in the morning and evening. To keep her bowels

right during her *enciente* period let the brood-mare have a bran mash weekly, mixed with oats and chaff, with a small quantity of Epsom salt therein. Of course, the in-foal mare should be allowed to range a wide paddock with other mares, nor is it a bad plan to have a well-roofed watertight shed in which the mares may shelter from the cold and rain. Breeders should recall that a mare which is continually kept in a box is a very difficult animal to get into foal. So it is not without reason that I say that a shed is necessary in every paddock for in-foal mares, for the mare which is exposed to cold and bad weather ruins her foal's size and constitution.

I wonder how many people realize that the most important years of a thoroughbred's life is the one spent inside its mother, for during that time its constitution is being built up, and the healthier the mother's blood-stream the more likely it is to thrive when it is foaled. It is, perhaps, necessary to insist that no geldings are turned out with the mare as they will worry and tease her, in which case she will be very likely to slip her foal, and even if the foal is not slipped the chance of mal-presentation at birth is greatly increased. On the other hand pregnant mares will keep quiet and generally will not gallop if they are unshod, especially if the ground is hard ; but it is as well to remark that the mare's feet must be looked too every month and rasped whenever necessary.

Owing to the variation of the periods of pregnancy it is necessary for the breeder to watch his mares very carefully, for some mares will foal at ten months while others run their allotted span, and there have been several instances when the mare has gone two months over her time. As a general rule mares carry colt foals longer than filly foals, but this is not infallible, and there must be no abatement of careful watching. A pretty safe sign is that when a mare approaches her time her udder will greatly increase in size, especially at night-time if shut up in a box, and a day or two before foaling she will show signs of uneasiness and probably some abdominal pains will follow. In most cases, except with young mares carrying their first foals, a waxy substance will most likely appear on the teats, and when this drops off the mare will probably foal within a few hours ; but before a mare can possibly foal the muscles on the quarters on each side of the backbone from the croup to the root of the tail must relax, and a some few hours will elapse before she will foal. The bowels must be kept open, and when the wax drops off the teats give the mare half a pint of linseed oil.

Like many breeding animals, mares are very shy about foaling,

and the usual custom at studs when mares are near their foaling time is for an attendant to sleep every night in a room next to the foaling-box. But this attendant should not be allowed to foal the mare, for that is the duty and responsibility of the stud-groom. It is really extraordinary how mares become excited and peculiar when they begin to feel their foaling pains. And for this reason it is always as well to let the mare foal herself if possible, as the females of the equine species possess powerful expelling muscles, and if the presentation is natural, a very short time will suffice to produce the foal. Sometimes a mare foals lying down, but in most cases standing up, and directly the foal is dropped the stud-groom should go into the box, see to the foal's mouth to ensure its proper breathing, and tie up the navel cord with a specially prepared piece of medicated silk. The actual birth should not take more than five to ten minutes as the foal comes in a water-bag on its stomach with its head and fore-legs presented first, with one leg slightly in advance of the other. If when the foal is born the water-bag is not already broken the foal must be liberated at once or it will suffocate.

After he has performed his duties the stud-groom should leave the box and let the mare lick her offspring dry as it is held by many breeders, myself among them, that this acts as a medicine for her as ordained by Nature.

After an hour or two if the foal does not get on its legs it is necessary for the stud-groom to go in again and hold the foal up and get it to suck, for very often thoroughbred foals are weakly and require a little time to revive. It is absolutely essential for the foal to take milk at once from its mother as this teaches it where to go for its meals. But the foal should not be allowed to have a great deal of milk as the first flow is apt to be rather rich and so bind up its bowels. At all costs these must be kept open, and if nothing passes then an enema should be pushed into the rectum and the waxy fæces softened until nature eventually expels them, but the stud-groom's fingers are generally quite sufficient to arrive at this end. The mare must be kept very quiet for the first three days as some injury may befall the foal and her milk might dry up if she is disturbed or excited.

That is the normal method of foaling a mare at a stud, but what are the cases where assistance must be given to the mare? I think of all of them wrong presentations are the worst and most dangerous for everyone concerned. Some people call wrong presentation mal-presentation; and this is when the foal wants to come hind-legs first; which is absolutely impossible, for the hips cannot get

through the passage that way. If this happens the stud-groom should carefully replace the foal in the womb and then insert his arm and slowly turn it round until he can get its forelegs into the passage, with its head lying on top or between them. In this position the foal can be brought out with the aid of the mare's muscular propulsive powers. Of course, cases are found where the mare has been straining for some time and begins to show signs of exhaustion. In this case if the foal's two fore-feet and head are in the normal position the mare may be aided by the stud-groom taking hold of the foal's fore-legs and pulling whenever the mare strains. Rope or cord must never be used as it is apt to injure the foal's pasterns. The mare will then strain violently and sweat profusely, but great patience must be used to give the strong muscles which are holding the foal back time to expand. And if violence is used the mare will be torn internally.

I have said as soon as the navel cord has been tied and the foal taught to suck the mare may lick her foal dry, and now comes the time when the mare herself should be attended to. If the mare is very exhausted and commences to turn cold give her a quart of strong warm coffee with some stimulant in it and put a rug over her and rub her ears and limbs. The mare will probably lie down, and while she is resting a warm bran mash with a double handful of oats in it may be prepared and given as soon as she gets up. When she does so the attendant should clean out the box, renew the straw; and in doing this he should be told not to make the bed too thick as the foal will get its feet mixed up in the litter when it first begins to "stagger" about. And it is possible too that the mare may try and savage her foal, in which case a twitch must be placed on the mare and a leg held up when the foal wants to suck. After about an hour the mare will cleanse and expel the after-birth, which will probably come in the normal way, but it will be serious if no after-birth appears in eight hours. No advice can be given upon a hypothetical case, but if it happened to a mare of mine I would certainly send for a veterinary surgeon. In any event the mare will probably show signs of pain for a day or two caused by the contractions of the muscles which have been stretched to allow for the passage of her foal. But these pains are not generally of long duration, and nearly always subside after twenty-four hours have elapsed.

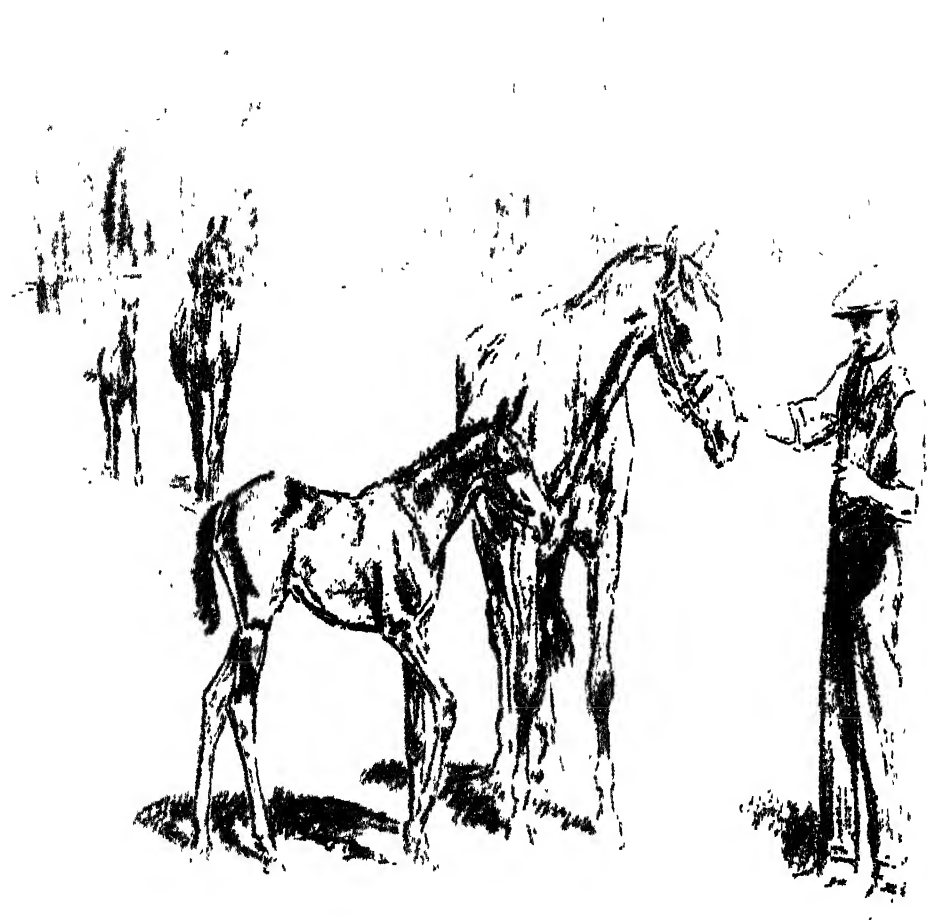
After foaling a mare generally comes into use about the ninth day and that is the proper time to have a mare covered. I have known mares which will come into use as early as the fifth day after

foaling, but these were generally, in fact I may say nearly always, false heats. After the first heat mares come into use every three weeks until they become pregnant, and so it is necessary to watch them very carefully and try them at least every twenty-one days. Perhaps it is as well to state that if a mare does come into use four or five days after foaling it is no bad plan to wash her out with some form of mild disinfectant.

And here a solemn word of warning, for if a mare is not fully in use it is against all her natural instincts to submit to the attentions of the stallion, and no mare will ever forget such an indignity and will be ever afterwards on the watch against such treatment. After all, the ovum only detaches itself from the ovary at the time when the mare is fully in use, and so the nearer that time the mare is served the more chance of her being in foal, a fact which stud-grooms and stallion-owners are rather apt to forget.

Before I end this chapter I must deal with that very serious matter which has been called "foal evil"—a dangerous epidemic to get into any stud. It is not easy to tell how it originates, but that it would be a great scourge with wide and extensive ramifications my own experience tells me. I have often thought that it is caused by some breeders tying up the foal's navel after foaling with a dirty tie, so causing a festering wound which may be transmitted to another foal quite easily. Another source of evil, I have been told, and can well believe, is the use of artificial manures such as blood and fish bought from manufacturing towns as top-dressings for paddocks. How short-sighted some breeders are is proved by the use of these manures, and in allowing bloodstock to graze upon paddocks treated in this manner. And thousands of pounds involved too! Whenever a case of "foal evil" occurs at a stud it is as well to sequester the paddock where it is thought that the case occurred; but it is really a hopeless task, and it would be better to allow all the paddocks to remain empty, and all the boxes to be thoroughly disinfected for at least a year.

Now as regards mares slipping foals, this is generally caused by some sudden fright such as a dog chasing and worrying the mare, but mares slipping foals can be cured if they are isolated at once and disinfected so that all danger of infection is removed. After the slipping all the bedding must be burned immediately, and the foetus buried and the whole floor of the box must be rinsed with boiling water which should be boiled in the box itself. This should effectually kill any germs and is the only way to stop the trouble spreading.



BROOD MARE AND FOAL

It has always been considered most difficult to detect a mare in the act of abortion, in fact, I very much question if any have really seen an actual case. There may be stud-grooms who have done so, but I have yet to meet one, though an old breeder told me when I was a boy that as soon as the abortion comes away the mare turns round and eats it. But if abortion does start in a stud it can be the most terrible scourge that can take place, and the only treatment is the one I have described, which has proved its worth. If abortion takes place in a paddock the paddock must be well rested, and certainly some technical advice from a scientist should be obtained. Be that as it may, abortion or rather early abortions generally take place in cold weather or when cold winds sweep the paddocks, and it is these early abortions which are so hard to detect. Many thousands of pounds are at stake at a large stud, and breeders should always be on the look-out, especially if they send their mares away to expensive sires.

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CHAPTER VI
IN THE STALLION-BOX

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IN THE STALLION-BOX

IT is not going too far to say that a successful stallion does much to enhance the value of any stud. If a horse is getting good-looking stock which is winning races and is a good sire, and above all possessed of lusty vigour, no breeder will have any qualms in sending mares to him. And the same thing applies to hunter-breeding.

I think it is fair to say that a stallion is selected by breeders on three points : 1. His breeding. 2. His Turf performances. 3. His looks, make and shape.

While racehorses and hunters are being trained for the arduous task in front of them they go through a very severe test from which only the best and soundest can emerge successfully. Therefore the more good racehorse names which appear in a stallion's pedigree the more likely that stallion is to pass on his racing abilities, and to impart to his progeny that make and shape, courage and stamina, which made the stallion's fame upon the Turf.

But what do we really call a good stallion ? A horse that has won the Derby and has been hailed by the racing prophets of the day as one of the " horses of the century ", or one that has won over a distance of ground and proved himself to be possessed of both staying power and stamina ? I do not think that a horse that has won the Derby has altogether an undeniable claim to command a high fee as a stallion ; in fact, I would rather say that a horse that has run well in the classics and then won over a distance of ground in four-year-old days is much more likely to be extensively patronized by breeders.

In many respects bloodstock breeders are like sheep, inasmuch as they are always willing to use a stallion which is getting a lot of winners and is fashionable at the moment in place of a horse whose staying power and stamina have been proved time and time again, but whose stock took time to come to hand and did not secure early Turf laurels. But of course, in the case of winners of classic events or of past handicaps it is easy enough to retire a horse to the stud at high fees because public breeders are only

keen to go to sires whose stock is likely to race well or to sell well at the sales.

I should never recommend anyone to try to make a young unproved sire into a high-class stallion, however well he is bred ; and if a moderate or unproved sire is desired to be used at stud then he must be so in a moderate way, and no great expectations can be placed upon him. What stud at the present day would send expensive mares to an unproved stallion ? A carefully selected mare, however, mated to a well-bred young sire might produce a good useful animal or even a classic winner ; but I dare to say that the resulting progeny would be christened as " chance-bred." Although one mare may nick with an unknown sire, but it is not likely with a moderate stallion if he finds that mare once in a hundred services.

Anyone who wishes to have a stallion at stud should take care that the horse is well bred and well known on the Turf. Then the stallion has a chance, but not otherwise, as in these days of competition it would perhaps be better if half the stallions in England and Ireland (especially the latter) were led to the knacker's yard and provided food for kennels.

A few words are necessary, I think, as to the management of both racehorse and hunter stallions at stud. One wonders how many people realize that it is wrong to lead a horse, mare, or yearling out of a box by the bit or even with a leading rein ? If a gentle hand is placed on the nose band with one's back turned to the animal it will come ever so much more easily. Of course, perhaps it is superfluous to say that care and warmth are absolutely essential to the stallion's well-being, for chills are often caught which may prove fatal. Or if a stallion is located at a stud it is a great asset to have a good roomy box at least 16 ft. by 16 ft., well ventilated, and with plenty of light. Looking after a stallion demands special treatment of its own. It is perhaps necessary to insist that there must be no shouting or abrupt manner in dealing with a stallion in all its bloom of condition and vigour. The steel hand in the velvet glove must be employed at all times, in fact, it is a pretty good rule that if a man is inclined to shout at horses, and by this I mean any type of horse, it is much better to sing or whistle, for gentleness allied to firmness is half the battle in connection with stallions.

A stallion should be gone about in the ordinary way, and the chances are that he will resent nothing. Stallions rarely kick, it is with their teeth that they generally attack ; and if they are very vicious a good plan is to throw a short rope gently towards them ; this they

will seize in their teeth and give them something to bite on, and then they can be racked up quietly enough. One has heard also of horses so vicious that they have had to stand in iron cradles—Speculum, George Frederick, and Marsyas being examples; even Barcaldine had to have an iron rod placed high up round his box so that he could be pulled round by a pulley, as it was never safe to let him loose.

Mention of Barcaldine reminds me of the romantic way in which his sire Solon came into the world. The story goes that an Irish breeder owned an animal called The Birdcatcher mare, with an emphasis on the *the*—so named and known, as she was believed to be his best daughter. There was a certain sire in England called West Australian, then standing at Lowther Castle, that the owner was very anxious to use for her. He took his mare over to Liverpool in a sailing vessel and rode her all the way to Lowther. When he got there, the sale of the stud had just taken place after the death of the then Lord Lonsdale, and the sire in question had been sold to a Frenchman with the equally mighty Bay Middleton. Of course, West Australian under the circumstances was not available.

Nevertheless, the Irish owner of The Birdcatcher mare was so disappointed and upset after all the trouble he had taken to bring her over that he persuaded the stud-groom to allow him to have one mating with West Australian, and permission was granted on condition that it did not detain the horse, which was due to go to France the next day. Thus it happened that Solon came into existence, as the mare proved to be in foal. Solon developed into a great horse and sire in Ireland, and his blood was much sought after.

His sons, Arbitrator, Barcaldine, Philamon, and many others, were all of outstanding character and individualism, and endowed with exceptional courage. It is a national asset that the blood was saved and it is an interesting fact that this blood is again coming to the front through Marco, Marcovil, Hurry On and Beppo. These old lines of some of our best bloods of the past can be ill spared, as new blood is required to revitalize our present-day's blood, even if it has lain dormant for some generations, such as Roi Herode, through Le Sancy, reviving the Pantaloon line, which goes back to Sir Peter Teazle, and the Godolphin Arabian. Another blood badly needed in this country is the American line of Hanover, a great hereditary staying line, going back to Glencoe.

However, let us return to the management of stallions at the stud. It is a very bad plan to allow any stallion to tease his own mares—

a special horse of no great value should be kept for this purpose. All mares should be tried every morning by the teaser to see if they are in season, and if so, then they are ready for the stud-horse with which they are to be mated. The reason why a teaser is used is to spare the stud-horse unnecessary excitement, as a disappointment is apt to spoil his temper and make him difficult to manage. The stallion must be led out to the mare in a very severely bitted bridle to control him. The mare must be hobbled, so that she cannot kick out at the stallion and damage him, which some mares are inclined to do. An unusually excitable stallion may need two men to lead him out, one on either side. Such horses as St. Simon and Musket, had to be brought out to their mares in this way.

A stallion will often severely bite a mare's neck, and if he is in the habit of doing this, a leather tab should be placed round the mare's neck for him to take hold of. The mare after being unhobbled should be led about for twenty minutes until she has calmed down and her nerves are quite composed. A mare that has been to the stallion should be tried again in three weeks, and if not in season then she can be considered in foal ; nevertheless she must be watched. But if she is in season again, then of course she must go back to the stallion and tried again in three weeks and so on.

Stallions should have an hour's walking exercise every day and sometimes two when the season is over. The season begins about February 1st and ends about the end of June. Good extra feeding is required during this period, as a stallion's duties are often very strenuous. Forty mares a season is the usual limit for thoroughbred stallions for getting racing stock. With half-breds as many as eighty are taken, and sometimes over a hundred, but it is too much, and does not produce an extra number of foals, and is not recommended. Some sires, if they are quiet, are often exercised along quiet roads, but stallions must never be trusted. They can be made docile enough with kindness by the man looking after them, but the excitability of their temperament is ever ready to upset them. Stallions which are never exercised, and are shut up in dark boxes, only just fed and barely ever cleaned out, often become very savage and poor foal-getters.

It is much better to keep them in open boxes with good light. Give them their regular exercise, feed them at regular times, and clean out all wet straw every day and then they will remain rational, quiet, and healthy. Sometimes after their season they are turned out into



WALKING EXERCISE

small enclosures for air and a change, but it is a fallacy to imagine they exercise themselves, because they do not. They only stand still all the time in one place. I do not advocate this system. I consider it far better to ride him for exercise if his legs are sound and in good order, but it is not every stallion that is quiet enough for this. There are cases on record when a stallion would not serve a mare and all sorts of expedients had been used to achieve consummation. In fact I can quote one myself as I once possessed a stallion which had a great dislike for a certain mare. It may have been the outcome of lassitude, perhaps he was not particularly well on that morning, or he did not care for the mare's general odour. In any event, serve her he would not, although the mare was quite ready to take him. My expedient was to call at the House of Woolworth and purchase three bottles of scent and two cakes of perfumed soap. We washed the mare's back and perfumed her until her aroma resembled that of a scent factory or of a *demi-mondaine* of Montmartre. The stallion was led forth and served the mare with vigour; and a beautiful colt foal she produced too!

And I have known of stallions which would serve a mare and wilfully hold back the semen and then come off her with all the appearance of having had a successful ejaculation. This type of stallion, which I would not care to possess, takes an expert to see whether he plays this trick or not.

So much for the management of the stallion at stud, but I suppose that this chapter would not be complete if I did not say something in support of the axiom that "like begets like." Since the war some seventy-five classic events have been competed and completed. A study of the results obtained over this period will bring to light many very interesting and important points. The most potent one is that—with very few exceptions indeed—classic winners have arisen solely from sires or dams the which are either classic winners in themselves or which are in the direct classic line. The sires which have been outstandingly successful include (a) Hurry On, (b) Swynford, (c) The Tetrarch, (d) Gainsborough.

Three sons of Hurry On have won the Epsom Derby, and one of them went on to win the St. Leger also. The special point of breeding interest, however, is that each of the colts in question—Captain Cuttle, Call Boy, and Coronach—was a typical chestnut in colour. Three other sons of this great sire have been very prominent candidates for the Turf "Blue Riband" during this same period. The reference is to the notorious Tom Pinch, to Town Guard, and to

Hunter's Moon. These were all failures ; and the point to note is that all were either bay or brown in colour. Then of Hurry On's daughters, we have two Oaks winners in Pennycomequick and Toboggan ; and two winners of the Guineas in Cresta Run and Plack.

With the fillies we come up against a reversal of the " racing-quality "—" colour " linkage, for the Guineas winner, Plack, is the only one of chestnut colour among those just quoted, and she was defeated by Straitlace, an exceptionally good daughter of a non-classic winner, when it came to the sterner test at Epsom.

The record of Hurry On is in perfect accord with the working of the Mendelian law, for, when suitably mated, this good sire transmits his own special qualities to his chestnut sons and to his bay or brown daughters.

The Turf, however, can show no clearer illustration of sex-linked inheritance than the truly remarkable case of Swynford. Since the War his daughters have classic achievements which are well worth detailing. These are Keysoe, St. Leger, 1919 ; Bettina, Guineas, 1921 ; Tranquil, Guineas and St. Leger, 1923 ; Saucy Sue, Guineas and the Oaks, 1925. This record becomes all the more impressive if mention be made of the year 1918 also, when Lord Derby's bay filly Ferry, by Swynford-Gondolette, won the Guineas, and when Stonyford, another Swynford daughter, finished first in the Oaks substitute race run at Newmarket, only to be disqualified for bumping and boring. Only one son of Swynford has, so far, carried off a classic event, namely Sansovino, the Derby winner of 1924, although he has three grandsons in *tail male*—Trigo, Blenheim and Windsor Lad—for which he may claim partial credit.

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CHAPTER VII
FOALS AND YEARLINGS



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THE one golden rule in looking after foals and yearlings is keep as near to nature as possible. This requires some explanation, but it may be summed up in the statement of giving a foal as much liberty, fresh air, and only grazing them as many months in the year as clime and soil will allow. Breeders should recall that any horse grows gradually, and their aim should be to make it grow evenly. To do this one must commence right at the beginning when the foal is three days old and has just started to suck. It is probable then that the foal will suffer from acute diarrhoea of a brownish watery type, but this is only a sign that the mare may be coming into use, and when it is so her milk becomes affected. The best way to get over this trouble is to shorten the mare's milk supply and give her 1 oz. of bicarbonate of soda twice a day to correct the acidity in her milk. If your foal does not then start and do well there is something radically wrong, for no horse should ever stand still but should always be improving by inches. Both mare and foal can soon be turned out, and should be, every day unless the weather is very bad, and the mare's milk-supply augmented by a liberal allowance of bran and oats which should be given when both come into a big roomy box at night.

The later the foal is weaned the better. Many breeders will probably disagree with me over this, but I am taking the common-sense point of view, for if both dam and foal are thriving what is the use of weaning? And the older the foal is at weaning-time the less it will feel the change of diet. Of course for many months the foal will have been cropping by its mother's side by day, and eating oats with its dam at night so it will certainly know how to feed itself.

About the middle of September, if the foal is well grown and doing well, is a suitable time for weaning; but it is a difficult period, and great care should be exercised so that the mare's supply of milk is checked. This can only be done by getting the foal to eat as much crushed oats and bran as it can. Then comes the separation from the mother which is often a poignant one. The dam must be kept in a box for at least twenty-four hours and starved and given very

little water, and then turned out in a paddock as far away from the foal as possible where neither foal nor dam can hear or see each other. It is generally easy enough at a stud to wean two foals together and bring them up simultaneously and in company, for this certainly alleviates the pang of parting and gives both something to think about. We will surmise that the foals are some six or seven months when weaned, when they should be turned out every day and given small and frequent meals of highly nutritious food, perhaps five or six times a day. Is not a foal running by the side of its dam in the habit of sucking freely, and if large and infrequent feeds are given for small and frequent ones, will not indigestion be the only result? The happy knack of bringing a foal up properly seems to be contained in the statement of increasing the size of the feed and decreasing the number of them as the foal grows older. But what of the mare? She will require the most careful attention for some time after her foal has been weaned. Maybe she is a deep milker; if so draw off the milk every three hours for the first day and night, and when doing so, never completely strip the mare but only sufficient to prevent the udder from becoming distended and inflamed. It is no bad plan to rub the udder well with olive oil every day and also to give the mare some mild purgative, as this saves the udder from becoming painful and swollen.

As to rations let her have a little dry hay and only a short allowance of water for two or three days. The milk secretion should then cease and the mare may be turned out in a paddock but not one with an abundance of grass in it, because she is not being so much turned out for feeding as for exercise. Once more we follow the foal through its life until it becomes a yearling; and here I say that yearlings should be carefully handled, for they demand quite different treatment to any other young animal. It must always be remembered that yearlings come from a very highly bred type of mammal and are susceptible to the slightest noise and excitement. It is always as well, as I said before, to let the colts and fillies run in pairs, as they thrive and come on much quicker than when alone. As soon as they settle down they must be handled and taught to lead. No roughness or shouting must be used during this process, and any stud attendant who transgresses in this respect should be warned once and for all.

It is always as well to keep the colts away from the fillies because colts are very rough in their play and are liable to hurt the fillies, but of course, when colts play together they should be able to stand up to each other. How pretty it is to see them rear up and paw



YEARLINGS IN Paddock

one another ! I wonder how many racehorses of the future have been ruined by being encouraged to play in home paddocks ? An old adage says, "start a habit, sow a character, reap a destiny" ; and it is true as far as the breeder is concerned, for what was once only a playful colt or filly very often becomes a bad-tempered rogue of a racehorse. It is the same with the pernicious habit of giving yearlings sugar ; misguided people entice them to play before receiving their lump with the result that the colts or fillies are always on their guard against the tricks of man—aye and women too, and the "cheeky" colt or filly has to go through the mill when racing-stable discipline is asserted.

So once more back to the paddocks. As soon as the sun rises and the dew has gone yearlings can be turned out, for they must have their gallop to stretch their limbs as nature dictates. Round and round they will go, first one in front and then the other, and only when they are winded will they settle down to graze. And it is here that the breeder may be able to tell which is his best galloper, for if among the same yearlings one is first all the time, or nearly always, it is pretty conclusive that it must be the best. The same with walking for a good walker is always a good galloper ; and it should be noted that an animal of this type reaches a maximum of speed with a minimum of effort.

As to feeding and dieting of the yearlings so many breeders have their own particular views that I do not propose to go into it in detail, but simply to say that if they eat their grass fairly when out in the paddocks and when brought in clean up a good feed of crushed oats and chopped hay with a little bran, there will not be a great deal wrong with them. But here a word of warning. No breeder, especially those who sell at Doncaster or Newmarket, should get their yearlings too fat, for they go to pieces when broken by trainers and also will probably have leg trouble. Is not a fat yearling generally in later days an unsound racehorse ?

Before the sales the yearlings should have plenty of walking exercise, which will make their muscles supple and loosen their joints and at the same time get them into a hard state of physical condition which will in itself recommend them to both owner, trainer, and buyer.

CHAPTER VIII
AT TRAINING-QUARTERS

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AT TRAINING-QUARTERS

MANY people seem to have got the quite erroneous impression that a trainer lives a Utopian existence, surrounded by thoroughbred horses and sporting dogs, living in a well-equipped house, with old wine and old friends in plenty to cheer his leisure hours. And this wonderful existence is further supplemented by generous monetary gifts from grateful owners. How false this impression is may be judged when I say that the trainer's profession is one of the most arduous known to man, in fact, only one or two can be compared with it.

The breeder has as much responsibility and works for as long hours, but then has not so much nervous strain nor quite so many of the worries which beset a trainer. A trainer's work is never-ending, his responsibility lasts every week for seven days of twenty-four hours apiece ! If a trainer of say an average number of horses—forty at the outside—were to spend at least five minutes with each horse under his care per *diem*, he would have spent over three hours of the twenty-four ! And then what of morning work, entries and forfeits intervening, or telephoning patrons, attending meetings, not to speak of strain of nerve and temper ? Verily, I would like to put some of the communists, who are always advocating shorter hours and higher wages for the poor oppressed British working man into a training stable and see how they endured the continuous work and discipline. But the training stables, nay, the thoroughbred itself, is an attribute of aristocracy, and so has no place in the scheme of democracy for which we fought and won the greatest war in history. But these are side-issues, reflections upon the age in which we live, and are not to my purpose.

It is not here that I intend to go through the whole gamut of the training-stable, but rather say something of the treatment of yearlings when they arrive at the training-stable. In a way it is the apogee of the career which I have endeavoured to trace in this volume. A classic victory will set the seal upon that career, but how is that brought about ? How does a trainer know if he has a good colt or a bad one ? Or is the colt or filly a sprinter or a stayer ? In the

last twenty or thirty years training methods have altered considerably. It may be due to the American invasion at the commencement of the present century, or owing to the fact that the conditions of many races have changed. There are at the present time very many more valuable races for two- and three-year-olds than there are for four-year-olds and upwards, so that the older system of training which aimed at a gradual building up of the racehorse into a thoroughly trained animal, step by step, founded upon a long and thorough preparation, has given place to the new training ideals, whereby quicker results are aimed at, and yearlings are forced along as exotic plants are in a greenhouse, so that they may be able to fulfil their two-year-old engagements. Both systems have their good points ; but I venture to say that under the new one horses are not so consistent as they used to be. Can it be that the early strain upon the heart and muscle and sinew, tells its own tale in three- and four-year-old days ?

One of the most arduous periods in the trainer's life starts in August and September, when the yearlings come into his hands for breaking and training. Will that good brown colt win Cup events, or does the sharp grey filly, with racing quality in her every outline make the most appeal ? If this is a hard time for the trainer and his assistants, it is one of the most interesting, because they are dealing with unknown factors which may be capable of great deeds, or nothing at all. That is why the breaking-in process should be done by experts, where gentleness and patience take the place of rough usage and force. And further, whether colt or filly is being broken in, it will seem to give the trainer some index in his own mind as to the temperament and tempers, capabilities and customs, which the yearlings possess. And let it be firmly borne in mind that each will differ from the other.

The first and main essential to successful breaking—for the racehorse can be made or marred for life during this process—is that it is done under supervision of a first-class head-man, who will not tolerate for one moment any bad language, roughness, or “knavish” tricks, such as jobbing in the mouth, or kicking in the ribs. It is an old stable maxim, and one behind which there is a wealth of sound common sense, that any man who is inclined to shout at horses should sing or whistle whenever he feels the urge come upon him to shout or give vent to coarse but refreshing oaths.

There are some—generally those whose mentality is satisfied

with the puerile sentiment and distressing humaneness of novels like *Black Beauty* and other works—who aver that the horse is one of the cleverest of God's creatures. It may be so ; but in a fairly long experience, I have never found that horses possessed any brains at all, nor indeed any guiding power, unless it was previously instilled by man ; and I agree with old William Day's opinion that the horse is the most brainless creature in existence. Instinct it possesses to a large degree, and a will of its own which may be shaped to better courses, but horses are not liberally endowed with brain matter, and if ever you have one which can think for itself, then it will either be in the first class in its own particular sphere, or the wickedest brute on earth. This may be a digression, but I am endeavouring to prove that the yearling must be taught, quietly and efficiently, from the very bottom, and the already developed instinct shaped into useful courses.

Yearlings naturally fight a lot in the first breaking, despite all the care that is taken, and if the weather is cold a chill is apt to throw them back and even delay their entry into the racing world for several months. Trainers have to contend with every variety of condition in which they receive the yearlings. Some are too fat and others thin and underfed. Those delivered in good hard condition, having had some weeks of steady walking exercise before leaving home, get on best when they are broken and are the first to go into training. They go on progressing and growing in the right way, and if of the smaller, wiry type come quickly to hand, while the big, growing type can be got ready for their engagements later. Another factor which trainers must consider when taking yearlings early in the year is that the racing season is not sufficiently advanced for them to know which of their own horses will train on for another season, whereas by September they know this with some certainty and can draft out the horses that are to be turned out of training to make room for the yearlings. They can then give them their personal attention.

As to the methods adopted in breaking yearlings, they will already have had, or ought to have had, sufficient handling at the studs, such as being led and handled, etc., to commence them in their first lessons. Very steady lads are selected for this job. "Dumb" jockeys are put on the yearlings backs and fastened round their girths. A bit is put into the mouth with reins attached, and fixed to the "dumb" jockey. Rubber pieces are inserted in the reins, which are left fairly tight so that the yearling in working his neck about gives a gentle backwards and forwards pull to his mouth. This exercise has to

be continued for some days until the yearling gets quite accustomed to it. It is the system adopted for making its mouth and preparing it for the proper bridle and bit. Some yearlings are very refractory when the "dumb" jockey is first put on, and kick about, while others sulk; however, in time and with patience all goes smoothly, and the yearlings become quite used to it.

The next step is "backing" them. A saddle is put on instead of the "dumb" jockey, and a very light lad put up, the yearlings still being led. After a while, when they are accustomed to the lad on their backs, a proper bridle is put on, and they are led about until they become quite used to being ridden. When leading is no longer necessary, the yearlings can then be ridden out to exercise with one or two very steady older horses. It is wonderful how soon they come to hand and adapt themselves to what is required of them. It takes a few weeks to get them sufficiently advanced to go in strings on to the training-grounds.

It is easily understood that during the breaking they can get hot, and sweat and are liable to catch a chill if the weather is cold and damp; so it is better to get the schooling over in the early autumn, if possible.

The yearlings are now broken and out on the training-grounds, and the next step is slow walking and trotting exercise with an occasional gallop of about three furlongs. When they can gallop nicely with a correctly balanced stride, they are sharpened up a bit and the distance gradually extended to four and five furlongs. The trainer, watching them gallop every day, can soon find out which are the best goers and the most resolute. Some come to hand much quicker than others, generally the smaller ones, as they have less superfluous weight to work off and can muscle up sooner. Those first to hand are entered for the early two-year-old races, and before the racing season commences are generally tried with one or two older horses, whose form is known, and thus their merits are ascertained. If they beat the older horses at the weights they are looked upon as smart and likely to win races early in the season.

If any of the yearlings have a number of engagements already made for them in their infancy, they may not be pushed on quite so quickly, as a great deal depends upon when these engagements take place, and upon the growth the then two-year-old is making. If slow to develop, naturally more time is required. It is not a good plan to push big growing two-year-olds (we must now term them two-year-olds, they having arrived in the spring of another year),

as they may all go to pieces and be put back months. Then again their legs, having to carry their bodies, must be considered, for too much strain must not be put on the joints until they are hard and set. If pushed too hard at first, such things as splints and spavins may break out, and the treatment of these means more delay. Such precautions are essential in getting young horses ready for racing.

The time has now come for a test which will give an accurate estimate of the powers of each of the stable's recruits. This is necessary with all two-year-olds, and of the very first importance with those which have classic pretensions. A trial is arranged between one or two juveniles and two or three older horses, the former being ridden by specially chosen and experienced jockeys, and the latter by the best stable-lads. The jockeys in such cases generally ride in colours. This gives the trial more the appearance of the real thing, and it is good for the young ones to see the colours and to realize what is happening, so that they will not be so nervous in a real race, and will understand to some extent what is wanted of them.

The weights carried by each horse are usually adjusted in the weight-cloths by the trainer himself, as that is his secret and part of the management of a racing stable. It is not wise to let the lads, or even the jockeys, know the weights, unless they are the jockeys attached to the stable, and then only at the owner's or trainer's discretion. It is usual for the owners to be present at these special trials. After the trial the respective merits of the two-year-olds can be gauged; and if one or more beat the older horses at the arranged weights they are considered very good and above the average.

It is on this knowledge that a programme of races is arranged for them, and a good idea of their chances ascertained for any particular event. Of course, preliminary racing is by no means confined to two-year-olds, but is extended to older horses engaged in the bigger handicaps, and is generally part of the preparation of a classic aspirant. As all stables adopt the same system, however, a trial cannot indicate any horse as a certainty for any particular race. It is possible and even probable that other stables have ascertained what is considered a "certainty"; and it is the struggle between these that provides the "glorious uncertainty" of racing, especially in big handicaps.

How often do we hear of a stable that has "a certainty" that "goes down", the race being not infrequently won by an outsider let in at some absurd weight. As regards the weights carried in these trials it may be said that the weight on the horse being tried is never overdone, but is sufficient to give him a chance of winning the trial

without unduly weighting him, the form of the trial horses being known and allowed for.

But it may well be that there is a yearling in the yard which does not come to hand well. There is no need for discouragement, as it is only a sign that other methods should be adopted, such as sending it away on the roads—a different way each day if possible for change of scene—with an old horse to lead it. The same with the starting-gate. Let the yearlings—and they are sure to be scared at first—line up as they would in a race, and work the gate up and down so that they come to look upon the whole affair as a plaything. Then jump them off for a short distance, with slack reins, otherwise they will stand still and know not what to do. As regards galloping it will be generally found that colts require more work than fillies—the former have to sweat a good deal as well—but two gallops a week are enough for any horse. It is the secret of keeping horses in condition, cleaning up their mangers, day after day, and putting on muscle at the expense of flesh, which betokens a master hand upon the reins of administration.

Whenever we see a colt or filly in all their glory of galloping action, running as straight as gun-barrels, to win a hard-fought race, we realize to the full, the golden rule, that “there are many more races won in the stable than upon the galloping-ground.”

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CHAPTER IX
IN THE SALE-RING

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THE Turf novelist loves to discover a colt endowed with the energy of St. Simon, the symmetry of Bend Or, and the dogged persistence of Isinglass running wild on some South Pacific isle! It is picturesque fiction, but, unfortunately, not at all true to real life.

But in all racing there is nothing quite so full of interest and possibility as viewing two- and three-year-olds, comparing one against another, observing how one has grown, another not lived up to early promise, and yet one more who astonishes us all by racecourse performances—for surely it is by performance on the turf that we can judge a racehorse at all. Appearances or conformation, or action may win prizes in the show-ring, but these three qualities—excellent attributes as they are—do certainly not win races on the turf. So it comes as no surprise to find that sometimes a two- or three-year-old which we secretly despised in the paddock wins races, while the better-looking one, to whose glorious lines our heart went out, is beaten, and does little or nothing during its racing days.

And in these paddock discussions, the value of various strains of blood, the qualities of stallions of the day, the notes and news from Sledmere to Harwood, there is one question which was never so insistent as at the present time: "Is the bloodstock industry still a prosperous one?" Does it still—in the face of the prices in the last year or so, at both Doncaster and Newmarket—pay a breeder to pay large service fees, and other sums for upkeep? Recently the top prices at Doncaster have been in the region of 7,000 guineas, and though there is both profit and compensation to the breeder in that sum, there is certainly none—in fact, a dead loss—in many of the prices returned in the sale list. To obtain, say, 300 guineas or even 500 guineas for a yearling in a period of high stallion fees, leaves a bill for the breeder to meet, with no chance of cutting losses.

That is the position to-day, and though many breeders are optimistic enough to hope as year succeeds year that they have at long last had "the pearl of the casket, the pick of the lot," there is not the

slightest doubt that very many of them lose money over breeding bloodstock. It is not given to all of us to breed a Gainsborough, a Hurry On, or a Solario, for surely luck to some extent plays a potent part here. Though there are many rich prizes to be drawn in the lottery of bloodstock breeding, they seem at the present time to become more elusive than ever.

To a very large extent the bloodstock market—by which I mean the prices obtained at the sales—is regulated by supply and demand, and in the face of this fact I think it is fair to say that the market at the present time is suffering from over-production. When—in the aftermath of war—prices soared upwards at Doncaster and Newmarket, many people went into bloodstock breeding misled by the mirage that here was an Eldorado, where money might be made with ease. Now prices have fallen, and yet we still view moderate yearlings, whose capital value is a small one, at the ring-side.

If the bloodstock industry is to remain healthy and prosperous, breeding activities must be, to a large extent, curtailed. The buyers who come from overseas will only buy an animal which is of the first class, whose make and shape and pedigree are *sans peur et sans reproche*. Those same buyers will not look at second- and third-rate animals. Surely then, it would be remunerative to the breeder, to breed two or three good yearlings every year, instead of a long string of animals whose future indeed, is a problematical one?

But this does by no means say that the industry is not prosperous. It has felt the nip of hard times, prophets have denounced it with scare headlines in the Press, but I think it has passed the ordeal satisfactorily. If stallion fees are reduced, and there is more breeding for quality instead of quantity, there is no reason why bloodstock breeding should not remain one of the most prosperous of ventures connected with the horse.

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CHAPTER X

IS THE DERBY A FAIR TEST?

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IT has been said, but upon what authority I am really at a loss to determine, that the Derby course is one of the severest and most trying in England. With that opinion I, for one, do not agree, bearing in mind the very moderate colts and fillies which have won the Derby or Oaks and were totally and completely vanquished at Ascot and other places in their careers afterwards. Probably the two most distinctive courses in England are Ascot and Epsom over the last three-quarters of a mile, the one being all up hill while the other is all down with fairly steep gradients.

How diversely horses are affected by winning over both courses in different states of going, past records do much to testify ; and yet another thing not to be totally omitted from mental calculations of the true racing worth of both courses is that some horses are superior to others over different courses of the same length. And with regard to this latter the shape ought not to be totally ignored, whether the course possesses sharp angles or is straight, whether the ascent be steep or gradual, the gradient of decline be little or much, or whether it be wholly flat. That the Epsom course does demand a high standard of jockeyship, the use of hand and head and eye, answering in seconds the message of the quick, opportunity-seizing brain, both Archer of yesterday and Donoghue of to-day would immediately testify. And probably both great horsemen would give it as their opinion that the Derby demands something more of a colt or filly which hopes to attain premier racing honours, than mere aristocratic lineage, good looks, and unblemished running reputation. There is no doubt that for the last decade the Derby, by the peculiarity of its course, the pace at which it is run, and the manner in which it is ridden in these days, has tended to create a distinct type of racehorse, possessing speed with a certain amount of stamina, whose conformation is exactly suitable for the course and whose physical fitness is of a high standard, just as the Grand National is generally won by a horse with great heart room, strong jumping quarters, and strong hocks, and who above all, can battle on and "come again" at its jockey's request.

As only one breeder can be credited with breeding a Derby winner once every year, the competition towards this great honour has grown keenly; and many a colt or filly I have seen as yearlings—nay, often as foals—which has been warmly commended by its breeder “as just the stamp to win the Derby.” What a pity there are not a dozen Derbys to test the merits, and bring added lustre to so many studs of these superlative animals!

But one cannot blame breeders for endeavouring to attain this desirable object, for the value of a Derby winner is naturally very considerable, and if he should also win the St. Leger, and the following year the Ascot Gold Cup, he crowns himself king of his generation. He is much sought after for breeding purposes, and his stock is always most valuable. The reason for this is that to win the Derby over the gradients of the Epsom course at the speed at which the race is run requires what is called a perfectly balanced horse—all quality and no lumber about him. His power behind should be equal to his power in front and he must have equally a strong, compact muscular back and middle piece. In fact, if it were possible to pick him up on a line through the heart of his centre of gravity, he should exactly balance, just like a pair of scales. A horse built on the lines as described should have the poetry of motion. All his joints, sinews and muscles should work in harmony so that he can glide along at full stretch with the least possible exertion. Such a horse should go equally well up or down a hill and on the flat. He will have just sufficient power and leverage behind so that his shoulders and fore-hand will work in perfect unison with his hind-quarters, and thus make the utmost of his propelling power. The natural gradients of the Derby course are such as to test over one mile and a half the speed and stamina of a three-year-old as no other course in the world is able to do, and the winner of the Derby is therefore rightly accepted and looked upon as champion.

It is curious, if one looks up the winners of the Derby and the St. Leger, to find that the Derby winners have on the average made the best and most successful sires in reproducing themselves and other good horses, much more so than the winner of the St. Leger, though that race is a quarter of a mile longer, and a horse has to have exceptional stamina to win. The combination of the two races is however a good test of our three-year-old, because if the Derby winner was not up to the average in a moderate year, the race for the St. Leger shows up his lack of stamina.

If it is possible to add a more searching test for their staying



THE PADDOCK (EPSOM)

powers it is in the race for the Ascot Gold Cup, which tests a horse's ability to train on and retain his stamina in his fourth and fifth years. However, the records show that few have gained this honour. Excluding Gay Crusader and Gainsborough, which won the Derby, St. Leger, and Gold Cup in the War substitute races, only five horses have succeeded in carrying off these three events. These are The Flying Dutchman (1849-50), West Australian (1853-54), Gladiateur (1865-66), Isinglass (1893-95), and Persimmon (1896-97). Stamina with speed are the essential qualities of a high-class thoroughbred and the pinnacle which breeders aim at. I have no hesitation in saying that England is the only place where such high-class horses can be bred. The Irish, the French, and other nations, have often tried to win the Blue Riband of the Turf, and now and again have been successful, but on very rare occasions, and then only with a horse bred from animals imported from England.

Our races are mostly arranged for speed, and unfortunately we have far too few long-distance events. In other countries more attention is paid to long-distance races to improve, as the argument is, the stamina of the thoroughbred horse. No doubt this is the case, and in the main better stayers are bred abroad, but allowing for all this they seldom win the Derby or the Ascot Gold Cup.

Such an animal as I have described is, of course, the dream of breeder, owner, and trainer alike ; but I am not one of those pessimists who always argue that the thoroughbred is degenerating, rather I would say he is of better type and more level than many of his ancestors, and is generally in better condition, thanks to modern hygienic methods of stable craft. Be that as it may, there is no denying the fact that in endeavouring to breed classic winners which will create speed records, the racehorse has undoubtedly increased in height. This may be owing to the forcing system and such a plethora of two-year-old events, but I think it more likely that it is the craze of speed and yet more speed, the increase of short and middle distance races at the expense of two-mile events, which called for a making light of weight and distance.

In the *Calendar* of 1749-50 is a list of stallions and their prices for serving mares, together with laudatory remarks, a few only of which I will notice. One advertisement (abridged) runs thus : "The fine Arabian horse brought over by Mr. Moscow from Constantinople, at three guineas, and half-a-crown the groom. He is near fifteen hands high." Again *Disman*, at the same price is strongly recommended on account of his great strength and size, being

15 hh., which appears to have been the extreme height of nine out of ten, whilst the others are described as being very little taller. Now if we contrast with these our horses many of which are 16.2 and 17 hh., we shall easily perceive how superior is their size to that of those I have been describing; while the low fee for serving the mares formerly charged contrasts strongly with that for stallions at the present rate, i.e., 400 and 500 guineas each mare.

But speed, even though it does occasionally make fresh Turf history by breaking records is certainly no criterion to prove a horse a good one. The time-test is valuable as a proof whether a race has been truly won or not, but the one great stumbling block as regards time is that it shows little or no difference between good horses or bad. Was Call Boy, who created a fresh time record in his Derby a good colt? I do not know, we did not see enough of him afterwards, and although he was sold for a record price, his stud career has not been a distinguished one. No doubt Felstead was a great colt when he galloped home in front of Flamingo, but he never gave us proof of what he could do at either Ascot or Doncaster, so here the time-test told us nothing except that a modern Derby requires to be ridden from pillar to post, which would have been the despair of the older school of jockeys. As soon as the tapes go up, a horse must get on to its toes, and travel at very nearly the pace of an express train to the judge's box. It may be for this reason that the Triple Crown is far harder to win than it was in the days of Ormonde, Isinglass and Flying Fox.

It seems as if the Derby demands a supreme and final effort from a colt, and when that has been exerted to the full, its career of brilliance fades and dies. Whether it is a good thing, I know not, but it will, I think, be many seasons before another great horse arises to follow in the footsteps of gallant Gainsborough—the last winner of the Triple Crown.

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CHAPTER XI
SOME MODERN THOROUGHBREDS

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WHAT do we really mean by the somewhat hackneyed term "home of the thoroughbred"? Is it a stud whose welfare and prosperity is based upon a satisfactory Doncaster sale average? Or may an owner so describe his stud-farm even when his colours are unknown to the Turf? Neither example quite explains the true significance of the expression.

To arrive at a satisfactory definition, we take the case of the sportsman who breeds his own bloodstock to carry his jacket on the Turf. And that is, if you are able to do it, the most satisfactory manner of satisfying an appetite for racing. To see the horses that you have bred yourself, to make plans for the matings of your mares, to weigh up and examine the winning strains in the different bloods, to find that your theories have worked out correctly—there is a joy in all these things which increases with the passing of years. And if you would see a stud where the owner breeds his own racehorses, horses which have written whole chapters in modern Turf history, then visit Lavington Park, once the home of a cardinal, which lies sheltered beneath the South Downs. In those spacious paddocks Lord Woolavington has bred bloodstock some of whose names will live as long as Turf history endures. His Turf career provides us with an example of how brains, foresight, and penetrating judgment have triumphed over the difficulties, technicalities, and dangers that bestrew the path of those who either own, breed or train horses.

For Lord Woolavington was not born among horses, nor did he succeed to the past traditions of a famous stable or stud. The Lavington Park Stud is the fruit of his own enterprise, of experience that has been backed by Scotch common sense. The horse-love (his coaching teams at Olympia remain a fragrant memory) was always there, and its latent impulses were stirred when the call of the Turf became an insistent one. And to the Turf Lord Woolavington brought that shrewd, far-seeing brain that had built up one of the greatest commercial enterprises of modern times.

Lord Woolavington had that instinct—might we call it inherent

gift?—of being able to weigh up a horse, to take it to pieces as it were, to balance blood against bone, speed against stamina. That judgment was not at fault when, in the early years of the present century, he purchased Epsom Lad, whose hoofs and shin bones have a permanent resting-place on the sideboard in the dining-room at Lavington Park. Epsom Lad was a comparatively cheap purchase, for he cost exactly £1,100. Sir Theodore Cook describes him in that monumental work *The History of the English Turf* as “one of the Ladas’ best sons . . . one of the few horses who have won both the Princess of Wales’ Stakes and the Eclipse Stakes.” And always shall we remember his victory in the latter race. The jockey’s saddle slipped, and he had to hold it with one hand behind him while he finished with the other.

Epsom Lad was one of the best horses to carry the white, black-hooped jacket, and his deeds were only eclipsed by those of Hurry On. The name of the impetuous chestnut son of Marcovil and Toute Suite has become a household word among sportsmen all the world over. And his history is interesting, and in our own time has made Turf history. How that charming writer “The Druid” would have revelled in it! For once again Lord Woolavington proved by excellent judgment that he saw great possibilities in the big, ungainly, chestnut colt that was bred by Mr. W. Murland. But Lord Woolavington (Mr. James Buchanan as he then was) saw farther than this. He saw that the colt possessed immense scope and wonderful liberty of movement. So he became the owner of the impetuous chestnut cheaply enough at 500 guineas. As time went on he developed into a thoroughbred of great power, and possessed courage of a high order. This impetuosity Hurry On probably owed to his descent in tail male from Solon, West Australian and the bad-tempered Barcaldine—which Fred Archer said was the best horse he had ever ridden.

Hurry On was a difficult horse to train; his one idea was to win every gallop in which he took part! So most of his work was done alone, and he was generally ridden by his trainer, Mr. F. Darling. Soon—it was in 1916—Mr. Darling had to fulfil his military duties, and Hurry On was sent to the stud at Lavington Park. But not before he had won the St. Leger, which, owing to the War, was run at Newmarket.

At the stud he at once became a success, and three Derby winners—Captain Cuttle (now famous as a sire in Italy), Coronach, and Call Boy—are on his roll of successes. In addition he has sired such good

horses as Plack, Town Guard, Tom Pinch, Runnymede, and others in whose veins flows the blood of one of the greatest bargains ever made by an owner. And Hurry On has done much to revitalize the West Australian line of Matchem, who was owned by Mr. William Fenwick of Bywell Hall in Northumberland. In that essentially horse-loving country they still talk of the deeds of Matchem, and no doubt many would be interested to see his illustrious descendant at Lavington Park. There you may see the fine-shouldered, deep-hearted, big upstanding chestnut, as full of fire and as impetuous as ever. Even though he is getting on in years—he is twenty this year—he is remarkably fresh and still persists in his old habits of fighting and playing with his bit. As the eye ranges over that grand top, the sloping shoulder-blade, the length from hip to hock, and takes into account the legs and feet, the mind ceases to marvel that here is one of the great horses of the century, who only seven years ago headed the list of winning stallions with the record sum of £59,109. And not far away from his sire stands one of his famous sons, Press Gang, a brilliant two-year-old whose early promise was marred in three-year-old days by a series of misfortunes. So he is now standing at Lavington Park, and breeders have not been slow in realizing that here is a stallion that incorporates some of the best winning strains, allied to excellent make and shape. His dam, Fifinella, was a beautifully moulded chestnut filly who won the Derby and Oaks for Mr. A. P. Cunliffe in 1916. She was a daughter of Polymelus out of Silver Fowl, by Wildflower out of L'Argent by Jacobite, and so traces back in tail female to that famous taproot—the dam of the two True Blues.

Press Gang, like all Hurry On colts, is chestnut in colour, and is not quite so tall as is his sire. He is a nicely moulded horse, wide over the quarters, with plenty of width from hip to hock—and that is where galloping powers spring from. Taking him all round, discounting his rather flat, shelly feet, that are outweighed by his good shoulders and middle piece, it is safe to say that here is one of the best young stallions in the list. He should, with chances and good luck, carry on the long-neglected line of Matchem with success. And so, past paddocks where the heavily-fleeced sheep of Sussex browse, and where the prize herd of Aberdeen Angus stand with dark eyes full of inquiry, to the Westerlands Stud, where one of Hurry On's most famous sons, Coronach stands.

So long as the Turf is written about, so long as memories dwell on hard-fought finishes and epic duels, there will be recalled the races

in which Colorado and Coronach opposed each other. To some extent it was a case of *The Flying Dutchman* and *Voltigeur* over again. There were Colorado camps and Coronach factions. And the two horses differed a great deal, both in looks and conformation, for whereas Coronach was a great strapping colt well over 16 hands, Colorado was cast in a smaller mould, beautifully balanced, combining both power and quality. But there was no doubt which was the better colt on that wet, eventful Derby Day, 1926, for Coronach went into his bridle straight away, taking ample revenge for the beating that Colorado had inflicted in the Two Thousand Guineas. Unfortunately Lord Woolavington was not well enough to lead in Coronach after his victory. His daughter—the Hon. Mrs. Macdonald Buchanan—deputized for her father, and in the entrance hall at Lavington Park you may see the scene commemorated in bronze. And then Coronach went from triumph to triumph, the St. James's Palace Stakes and the Eclipse Stakes being among them, till those triumphs culminated in a St. Leger victory in record time—3 mins. 1 $\frac{2}{5}$ secs.

That is a very short history of Lord Woolavington's second Derby winner, and it is necessary as providing us with an insight to Coronach and as to his chances of becoming one of the leading sires of the day. For, as he stands on the lawn outside his box, it is not easy to fault him. Everything we look for in a racehorse—the muscular quarters, oblique shoulder-blades, round ribs, short cannon-bones—is there. He has thickened out since his racing days, become a little “cresty” and let down considerably. Nevertheless, as he stands, with a wandering shaft of sunlight flecking his rich chestnut coat to gold, he is an ideal type of English thoroughbred of high breeding. In short, an aristocrat of the equine world.

Like many other sportsmen, Lord Glanely came to turf and stud by way of the hunting-field and show-ring. More than thirty years ago he had a large stud of hackneys, and his weight-carrying hunters and cobs took their share of prizes at Richmond, Olympia, and other principal horse-shows. But now Lord Glanely's interests are devoted to racing and bloodstock breeding. He is probably the biggest bloodstock breeder in the world. The keen, astute brain, which has fostered and built up so many vast commercial concerns, has been brought to play its part in the bloodstock-breeding world. Lord Glanely acts upon his own judgment. No more fearless buyer of bloodstock ever walked into a sale-ring. And surely that judgment was never better vindicated than when Lord Glanely paid only 470

guineas for Grand Parade, which carried the black, red, white and blue-belted jacket in the Derby of 1919.

Like many other Turfites, Lord Glanely has known the ups-and-downs of luck, the great lottery of breeding, the glorious uncertainty of the Turf; but it takes a very great deal to dishearten him and, incidentally, considerably more to induce him to part with any of his bloodstock, so keen is his love for the thoroughbred horse. And in the wide-stretching paddocks both at Exning and at Compton Park, will be found some of the choicest lines of blood in the *Stud Book*. Naturally the blood of Orby predominates, inherited through Grand Parade, which was used so freely here; but Lord Glanely is also a great admirer of the stout-running blood of Gainsborough—as indeed he should be, when we recall the winners he has owned by Lady James Douglas's famous sire.

Lord Glanely holds the opinion that Gainsborough—or any of the Bayardo line, for that matter—mates the best with sprinting lines such as that represented by the all-powerful Tetrarch family. And of this cross, probably the most worthy representative is Singapore, winner of the St. Leger, hero of that epic battle for the Ascot Gold Cup, when Trimdon and he ran interlocked past the judge's box; the verdict being the shortest of short heads in favour of the former.

Now Singapore has taken over stud duties, and hard indeed it is to fault him, for as the eye travels over those lovely lines, the length from hip to hock, the short strong back and muscular quarters, the thought came to my mind that here is a stallion which will rank with the highest ere long. Lucky indeed are those breeders who can obtain a nomination for this good horse, which is so well coupled, so level, and possesses such a true, free-moving action. As he moved away with that easy, slinging walk—the thoroughbred's true prerogative—his place was taken by the Steward's Cup winner, Navigator, a somewhat rangy-looking chestnut, built upon more massive lines than Singapore. A son of the costly Blue Ensign, from the Hurry On mare Chronometer, Navigator has an excellent front, strong hocks and ample lung room. This handsome chestnut with his white-blazed face should make an ideal stallion for the right stamp of mares—those of a level character, with plenty of quality about them.

At Worksop Manor, too, it is pleasant to find a stud with a definite purpose. Such is the policy of Capt. John Farr, who has worthily filled the breach caused by the death of the late Sir John

Robinson. In his own day Sir John laid down many well-defined conditions of bloodstock breeding which were fulfilled when Bomba won the Gold Cup at Ascot, when Tulibardine was winning all his races in the days of Periosteum (now a King's Premium sire), and last but by no means least, when gallant little Papyrus crowned the efforts of the stud by winning the Derby. When Sir John Robinson died it seemed as if my pleasant annual visits to Worksop—where Mary Queen of Scots was imprisoned with grim-faced old Bess of Hardwick as her jailer—were to cease. But such indeed was not the case. For Sir John—and many is the pleasant hour I have chatted over shape and conformation lines, of blood and performance with him—left one behind him whose love of the thoroughbred was perhaps even greater than his own. And this was his great-nephew, Capt. John Farr, who has seen life from many angles, who has fought and gambled and made his way over the whole world. Commencing with a pilgrimage to the Boer War at the age of seventeen, Capt. Farr has founded businesses of which he is now the head, and his quota to the bed-roll of public services in Robin Hood's country of Nottinghamshire is indeed a lengthy one.

During our matutinal ride on one of my annual visits, when his farm bailiff once asked me to come and see a prize pig—I had been introduced to him as some sort of authority upon bloodstock!—Capt. Farr told me that during his War services he was employed in Egypt in training camels. From camels to bloodstock is indeed a long cry. Yet when I have seen the choice collection of brood-mares, whose condition was indeed an ample tribute to the capability and experience of Fred Hall, I wondered no longer about the sane and sensible principles practised by Capt. Farr, whose reasonable annual "weeding out" policy is certainly bearing fruit.

All those who are interested in the intricate and scientific science of breeding bloodstock should visit the Worksop Manor Stud, if it is only to see the well-planned stud arrangements over which the late Sir John Robinson spent so much time and trouble, care and patience. Probably there is no stud in the world where mare and foal and yearling are so comfortably housed as those at Worksop Manor, with its well-sheltered paddocks, cosy boxes and excellent arrangements for both water and feed. Each box stands in the middle of its own paddock, built in such a manner as to attract the maximum of the health-giving rays of the sun, with the extreme minimum of cold and discomfort. And the grass? You have only to glance at those pastures, fetlock deep in green, nutritious grass grown

from a limestone soil to realize why bloodstock does so well at Worksop Manor. And surely lime makes bone, and bone gives stamina.

It is a singular fact that although the late Lord Rosebery owned four remarkable colts, Ladas, Sir Visto, Velasquez, and Cicero, none of them attained any great success as a sire of winners. Possibly Cicero did most in this direction, but he was never really in the first rank of stallions. On the other hand, the highly descended broodmares went on producing generations of good horses to carry the "primrose and rose hoops" to victory in famous races. It was the acquisition of Paraffin, by Blair Athol from Paradgrim, that really laid the corner-stone of the late Lord Rosebery's stud and turf fortunes. Her daughter, *Illuminata*, produced Ladas, *Chelandry*, *Gas*, dam of Cicero and other good winners, and did yeoman service at the stud, as did the Agnes family, through Bonnie Agnes, and some of the old Mentmore breed also did well for him.

The deeds of all these famous horses and mares are to be found in contemporary history, but the ideals and traditions so well and truly laid have not been allowed to lapse by the present Lord Rosebery, a keen polo-player, a fine judge of both racing and bloodstock, and one of the best heavy-weights to hounds in the whole country.

I have spoken of Lord Rosebery's excellent bloodstock judgment, and never was this better displayed than when he bought the somewhat small, yet muscular, compact bay colt by Sansovino out of Waffles at Doncaster in 1929 for 3,600 guineas. Bred by Mr. J. J. Maher, Sandwich—as the colt was afterwards christened—won the Chester Vase, the King Edward VII Stakes at Ascot, and wound up a brilliant three-year-old career by winning the St. Leger for Lord Rosebery—his first classic success.

As a four-year-old Sandwich was rather a disappointment; perhaps his somewhat delicate frame had not recovered from his exertions as a three-year-old. So Lord Rosebery very wisely retired him to the stud, and it was in his first season as a stallion that I saw him. A beautifully proportioned horse, with a fine racing outline and ample length from hip to hock, Sandwich is indeed hard to fault, for with his good legs and feet, muscular quarters and oblique shoulder blades, he seemed to me upon a summer's day, when the golden sun lit up his rich bay coat, to be a typical specimen of the British thoroughbred, the like of which no other country in the world can show.

And if Sandwich proved himself to be a bargain, after a comparatively small outlay, what can be said of Miracle, whose purchase price was 170 guineas?

Here again, keen judgment was discriminatingly displayed, for when he was sold by his breeder, Lord Beaverbrook, the somewhat mean brown colt, long of coat and untidy of tail and mane, did by no means appear to be a potential Eclipse Stakes winner. As a two-year-old the son of Manna and Broderick Bay, a true daughter of Swynford, was unbeaten, and I have vivid recollections of his victory in the Gimcrack Stakes at York. Then it was that we were able to visualize a definite Turf career for this somewhat ungainly youngster, who got over the ground in such an easy fashion. As a three-year-old, Miracle improved by leaps and bounds, and after winning the Newmarket Stakes in easy fashion came to the Derby post full of muscle and in "cherry-ripe" condition. And a bold show he made in the Derby too, in fact, at the distance I thought that he had won, until F. Lane brought the very fit April the Fifth—now also at stud—in one long Chifney-like rush, to beat Dastur and Miracle by three-quarters of a length and the shortest of short heads, in one of the most thrilling Derbys on record. Thereafter, Miracle ran well at Ascot, then won the Eclipse Stakes, and after that gruelling race Lord Rosebery very wisely decided to send his consistent horse to the stud. And it was there I saw him, finding much to admire and praise in his strong, galloping quarters, well-boned limbs and well-sprung ribs, betokening great heart room.

Like a good many of the Phalaris family, Miracle has a rather rugged, coarse outline, but great racing strength lies therein, and it will surprise me greatly if he is not a great success at the stud, for his great-grand-dam, Anchora, is also the dam of Pharos and Fairway—so Miracle throws back to Wisdom—yet another example of an inbred sire getting a speedy stock.

It is remarkable, too, to find such a difference between two stallions at the stud, to contrast the blood-like Sandwich with quality in every breeding line, with the rugged frame and lop ears of Miracle. And each has a definite purpose, one, no doubt, will beget his high-class sons and daughters; the other seems fit for any purpose for which the light horse may be used. I can only draw a similar parallel between Gay Crusader and Gainsborough.

CHAPTER XII
ROUND SOME FAMOUS STUDS

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TO the true horse-lover there is always the problem of deciding in one's own mind whether to go racing or visit some stud where mare and foal and yearling drowse away many a sunlit day in lazy grandeur.

Whenever both opportunities are at my disposal I would much rather visit a stud than go through all the hustle and bustle, dust and heat, of a race-meeting. Being no gambler, but possessing a life-long affection for the thoroughbred horse, a visit to a stud always brings me tenfold more pleasure. At one time or another I suppose I must have visited practically every stud in England and Ireland, and not a few in France and on the Continent. It is always interesting to compare the various mares and foals with each other, and to hear the latest stud news, with occasionally a dash of hunting or coaching gossip to season a well-brewed sporting dish.

In the North I have spent many happy hours at the Theakston Hall Stud with my old schoolfellow Mr. A. McIntyre, who is the fourth of his line to carry on bloodstock breeding traditions at Theakston Hall, at one time the home of Holiday House and Best Man, whose famous daughter Stolen Kiss made Turf history just prior to the War. Now Thyestes occupies the stallion-box there, and although he is a horse I never cared much about, his make and shape being more suggestive of harness than racing, none the less his foals are very promising.

From there I go on to where the turrets of Warwick the King-maker's old castle at Middleham split Yorkshire's blue skies, to visit Mr. Dobson Peacock, doyen of Northern trainers, and a Yorkshireman after my own heart. Many an hour have I spent with Mr. Peacock discussing racing lore and Turf history; and I have also learnt a very great deal from him, for whenever you sit down at night with him it is no easy matter to get away, especially as every now and then he rings the bell and asks the servant with extreme courtesy to bring just a little more whisky!

His good horse Forerunner, is one of Chaucer's best sons, and his stock have won countless races in the North. Before he took out a

trainer's licence Mr. Peacock's son Harry had the Spigot Lodge Stud with Arcade, Jazz Band, and Planet as lords of the harem, and he still has a nice lot of brood-mares in the paddocks that encircle his picturesque home, which is christened after Jack Spigot, an early St. Leger winner.

Nor must I forget my old friend Mr. W. Johnson, who always welcomes me whenever I visit the Thirkley Barugh Stud, which lies beneath the blue Hambleton Hills where racing had its birth. Mr. Johnson has bred his share of winners, and his definition of a brood-mare must be included here. According to his dictum a brood-mare should have "a head and neck like a lady's maid, and a back and bottom like a cook!!"—true words, if coarse!

Then comes Sledmere which I have always regarded as sacred to the cause of the thoroughbred, for have not the Sykes left their name writ bold in the imperishable record of the stud-book? The stud itself lies a bow-shot from the small village which, by the way, has no front doors as the second Sir Tatton Sykes could not bear to see women gossiping in front of them! Mr. Adrian Scrope is now manager here, and the useful knowledge and experience which he gained in New Zealand where he managed Sir George Clifford's stud, is certainly bearing fruit at Sledmere, for the yearlings whenever I see them before the Doncaster sales are always up to Sledmere standard.

Then past the monument of that fine old sportsman, the first Sir Tatton Sykes, we come to Burton Agnes where Winalot stands at Capt. Wickham Boynton's well-equipped stud which every year turns out its share of winners. And what memories come back whenever I visit Chester, that ancient walled town which has seen the passing of Pict and Dane, Saxon and Norman, whose galleried streets almost plunge one back into medieval days, and of racing giants of the past.

At the Eaton Hall Stud it is almost as if one were treading hallowed ground, for are there not traditions which will never be effaced so long as racing remains in this country as our national sport? It was pleasant to realize also that the present Duke of Westminster has not allowed those traditions to lapse. Indeed, it is safe to say that the Duke cares little for racing, but devotes much time, attention and money to breeding bloodstock. Between him and his good horse Twelve Pointer (the present lord of the harem at the Eaton Stud) there is a great bond of affection. The up-standing, strong-backed, and muscular-quartered son of Royal Realm knows his master,



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and the Duke has a great admiration for the good horse which carried the Grosvenor "yellow, black cap" to victory in fourteen races, and won over £12,000 in stakes, including the Cambridgeshire, carrying top weight, the International Two-Year-Old Stakes at Kempton Park, the Houghton Stakes, Scottish Derby, Challenge Stakes, Liverpool, when he beat Polyphontes which received 8 lb., and afterwards won the Eclipse Stakes, Sandown Park. Surely this is a useful record? At the stud, too, Twelve Pointer has proved his worth, and last year he sired the winners of twenty-four races, with a value of over £6,000 in stake money.

I remember once going to see Sir Edward Hanmer's Bettisfield Park Stud, which lies in the centre of Sir William Watkin Wynne's country, not many miles—although you cross the Welsh border—from Whitchurch, where mad Jack Mytton of Halston performed many a madcap trick. I knew that I would see a choice collection of brood-mares, fitting mates for the stallion at Bettisfield Park, Gallini—one of the soundest and best-couraged thoroughbreds of the present day. For many years Sir Edward Hanmer, who is so sure of Gallini's success at stud that he has gone to great expense to give this good horse a well-built box and paddock and also made ample accommodation in paddocks of the best for visiting mares, has been interested in both racing and bloodstock, and I well recall his beautiful mare Pomagne, a well-built daughter of Pommern and Serviceable, starting favourite for the Northumberland Plate, won by Ballynahinch, which is now a King's Premium sire of more than ordinary merit.

It is not surprising that Sir Edward Hanmer's sporting affections have centred upon the Turf, for his ancestors bred and reared and raced bloodstock from Bettisfield Park in the days of long ago. Away back in the sixties of the last century, the useful Japan, by Sweetmeat from The Wizard, was bred there; as was Varnish, who bred in 1884 Veracity, which won both the Lincolnshire Handicap and the Cambridgeshire in the same year—1888—a feat which has never been equalled.

So it is only natural that Sir Edward Hanmer finds a joy in the clean lines of the thoroughbred, and is just as happy in walking round his well-arranged paddocks as seeing his primrose and dark-blue-collared jacket carried on the crowded racecourse. But would not any owner do likewise when he has such a stallion as Gallini at stud? But even though Sir Edward Hanmer possesses a horse which should, with ordinary good luck make up into a first-class stallion, has his racing luck not been exasperating? Let me tell the story.

In 1931 Mr. Dobson Peacock, who trains for Sir Edward, found out that Gallini had inherited all the racing abilities of his sire, Spion Kop, and tried this good colt to be 6 lb. better at weight for age than Heronslea over seven furlongs, on April 17th, 1931, when only three parts fit, Heronslea having just previously run very well in the Lincolnshire Handicap. Now it is common knowledge that 1931 was a vintage year for bloodstock, and despite the opposition offered by Cameronian, Orpen and others, Sir Edward Hanmer determined to try his luck at Epsom in the Derby. His trainer had stated in more than emphatic terms that Gallini was the best horse seen in the North for many years. Why should he not take his fair chance against the cracks of the South.

So Gallini came to Epsom to take his chance in the Derby of 1931, but here ill luck still pursued Sir Edward—who, by the way, was seeing the greatest race in the world for the first time—for Gallini was found to be lame in the paddock, and it was considered advisable to replate him. And well do I remember Mr. Matt Peacock's forcible language and heat of temper when he found out this to be the case! In the race itself Joe Taylor, who rode Gallini, told me that Gallini was pulling his arms out rounding Tattenham Corner, and some people think that the jockey should have given the colt a "steadier" when he reached the top of the hill before Tattenham Corner. But I knew Taylor was convinced that he would get the mile and a half, after his performance in the Copeland Plate—one and a half miles—at Haydock Park, on May 15th, 1931, and it was entirely due to losing a plate when crossing the bare pathway after Tattenham corner that the colt naturally shortened his stride and lost his place, and in spite of this, and having been lame through plating before the race, finished close on fifth. Hard luck indeed for owner, trainer and jockey. After this Gallini ran in the Irish Derby, but the Epsom race told its tale, and the colt ran badly. Now he is at stud, and there I saw him, not having done so since that fateful day on Epsom Downs.

As time goes on studs are given up, bloodstock breeding activities cease at various centres; but it is generally found that other studs spring up to take the place of the derelict ones. Such is the case with the Brickfields Stud at Newmarket, which was started five short years ago by Mr. Harvey Leader and Mr. Basil Briscoe, sometime joint Masters of the Cambridgeshire Harriers. From moderate commencement the stud has increased, and now is a well-equipped establishment, with an excellent riding school for exercising yearlings in

wet weather, and cosy, white-railed paddocks deep in nutritious grasses.

The management of this progressive stud has now been entrusted to the care of Mr. P. C. Purcell, for many years at the National Stud, and one of the most knowledgeable men in the bloodstock breeding industry.

When he managed the short-lived Compton Park Stud for Sir Alec Black, Mr. Purcell bred there : Titian, The Blue Boy, Lady Nairne colt, and the One Thousand Guineas heroine Brown Betty—a most charming filly in every way. It may well be, with so much good material to hand, that he will do equally well at the Brickfields Stud, where the only thing that seems wanting is the presence of a first-class stallion.

Lying high on the Berkshire uplands, over 500 ft. above sea-level, stands the Pibworth Stud, with its wood-shaded paddocks and roomy loose-boxes. No better centre for rearing throughbreds could have been chosen, as there is not only short sweet grass to crop, but also an excellent subsoil of chalk. And is not chalk one of the greatest adjuncts in raising bone and substance? The Pibworth Stud, whose wide paddocks are some of the best which I have seen for some time, is also a new venture which has only been in being some four years. Perhaps bloodstock breeders will recall its inception, for the first lord of the harem at the stud was Knockando (now I believe at stud in South America), which was followed by Embargo, a very handsome though unlucky horse, which, in his turn gave way to Salmon Trout, the present occupant of the stallion-box at the stud. All of us, of course, will remember 1924 when the son of The Tetrarch and Salamandra (for which mare Lord Furness afterwards gave the large sum of 16,000 guineas) won the St. Leger handsomely in the hands of "Brownie" Carslake in the "green and chocolate hoops" of H.H. Aga Khan, and most of us are fully conversant to the fact that he is responsible for such good winners as the redoubtable Salmon Leap, Good Fish, R. B. Bennett (christened after Canada's Prime Minister), Beneficial, King Salmon, and Reel, winner of the Metropolitan Plate—value £4,000—in South Africa. A remarkably cheap horse—his stud fee is only £150, with a fertility return for 1932 of 84·6 per cent.—Salmon Trout is now owned by a syndicate. Is there little wonder for breeders wishing to use a horse full of what our ancestors termed the best "running blood", and whose pedigree combines the blood of Bend Or and Galopin? For here is a highly-couraged stallion with the best of limbs and good stock-getting propensities, the sight of which, as he stood, when I saw him, with

the sun on his bay coat as bright as polished ivory, would gladden any horse-lover's heart. Full of quality, with good shoulders, a nice short back, and any amount of length from hip to hock, Salmon Trout does not, except perhaps about the head and quarters, favour his sire, the spotted grey The Tetrarch at all. Nor is there in coat and colour any of the grey hairs of the tell-tale "blotch" which denote ancestry from the Brownlow Arabian of which family The Tetrarch was probably the worthiest representative.

When at liberty in his own paddock, Salmon Trout soon proves that he possesses liberty of action, though he is a little "straight in front." This physical disability did not deter the bold bay colt—as he was then—from winning the St. Leger. Both owner and trainer will testify that Salmon Trout was a remarkably sound, well-constituted horse in training; and at stud, breeders will discover the same if he is matched with the right mares.

Of all the stallions I have seen, Salmon Trout, more than them all, reminds me of his maternal grandsire Galopin. When Prince Batthyany was asked to name the price of Galopin as a stallion he replied: "Ten thousand guineas, with the condition that he never leaves England's shores." I earnestly trust that the Pibworth Stud Syndicate will say the same should an offer be made for Salmon Trout, who certainly proved he could make light of weight and distance when he ran such a distinguished performer as Santorb to a length in the Ascot Gold Cup in 1925.

It was through a variety of circumstances that Sir Lawrence Philipps took up racing, and the equally fascinating study of breeding bloodstock. He was not born to either. For years neither held a great deal of interest for him. In fact, I think it is fair to say that his colours—black, white sash and sleeves, gold cap—were registered out of sheer self-defence. It arose in this way. For several years Sir Lawrence rented the wonderful partridge shooting at Six Mile Bottom (where in the Merry Monarch's day the Duke of Buckingham and Lord Rochester played many a rakish joke) and he found that every time a partridge drive had been fixed over a choice bit of country, that most of his guests wished to see races called the Cesarewitch and Cambridgeshire run for!

So, wishing, to have some active interest in the sport, he went to the Doncaster September sales, bought a yearling by Flamboyant from the White Eagle mare Lady Peregrine, bred by the late Sir John Robinson at Worksop Manor, and two years afterwards nearly won the Derby!

The level, good-topped bay colt was aptly enough christened Flamingo, and won three races straight off the reel as a two-year-old, including the valuable National Breeders' Produce Stakes, and did even better as a three-year-old by defeating a representative field in the Autumn Produce Stakes, winning the Two Thousand Guineas easily from Royal Minstrel, and running Felstead to two lengths in one of the fastest Derbys on record. Whether Sir Lawrence enjoyed the proverbial beginner's luck, or whether good judgment, tempered with keen business acumen and foresight was vindicated, I am not prepared to say ; but I rather incline to the latter opinion, for Sir Lawrence realized that after Flamingo had run fourth in Fairway's St. Leger that here was a horse which possessed all the attributes of a stallion in looks and conformation, pedigree and performance. So Flamingo went out of training and took up his duties as a stallion at Dalham Hall ; and it was here I saw him, at the stud which was once owned by Mrs. Langtry (" Mr. Jersey " to another generation of racegoers) when she had Aurum and Merman there.

Not since he ran unplaced in the Grand Prix had I seen Flamingo, and it was with the most pleasurable anticipation that I looked forward to my visit. Nor was I disappointed, although, to be sure, there is a great deal of difference in a racehorse in all the vigour of training and condition and a stallion which has let down and thickened out at stud. But once more I fell in love, as in fact I had done during his racing days, with those glorious shoulders, deep, well-sprung ribs, strong quarters and ample length from hip to hock, and the all-quality, blood-like outline which the bay son of Flamboyant has inherited from his paternal grandsire Tracery. There is no doubt that Flamingo is a stallion of the highest class, quiet with his mares, and it is perhaps unnecessary to add that he is greatly in request by breeders, who realize that his pedigree is full of the best winning blood, inherited from such giants as Galopin and his son St. Simon, Isonomy and King Tom.

In the next box to Flamingo at Dalham stands his seven-eighths brother-in-blood Horus, which I shall always consider as the best-looking horse of his year, an opinion which I know Mr. Jack Jarvis likewise shares. This beautifully balanced, strong-hocked light chestnut is likewise Worksop bred, being by the Derby winner Papyrus—another offspring from the famous stud—from Lady Peregrine, and as a three-year-old was only once unplaced, namely, in the Derby, a defeat the colt quickly atoned for by winning the valuable King Edward VII Stakes at Bosworth. In all his races

Horus always gave me the impression that he was a "battler"; and that, in conjunction with his looks and conformation, should certainly prove of distinct benefit to the thoroughbred in other generations. And could anyone ask more than to see two such stallions in all their pride of vigour upon one day? I do not think so.

It is pleasant in these days when so many pessimists are prophesying the downfall of the bloodstock industry, to find a stud where a spirit of buoyant optimism overrides all difficulties, be what they may. This hopeful outlook is found at Coombe Park, where on the breezy uplands of Berkshire, for many years, Mr. C. E. Howard has bred bloodstock. Mr. Howard's name will not lightly be forgotten. It will for all time find a place in Turf annals and be coupled with Willonyx, one of the greatest handicappers of all time. Many were the victories of this great horse, but none were equalled by his performance in the Cesarewitch, in which he carried the crushing burden of 9 st. 5 lb. to victory over the gruelling Newmarket course, perhaps one of the most exacting tests of stamina and stoutness and courage in the world.

In the smoking-room at Coombe Park hangs an admirable portrait by Lynwood Palmer of the son of William the Third and Tribonyx, and the artist has caught the game head, the good shoulders, strong propelling hocks and great heart-room which so distinguished the great stayer, after whom, by the way, the late Mr. S. Darling called his house at Beckhampton. Willonyx's monument is still "plain for all folks to see" at Coombe Park. The traditions which Willonyx and Weathercock and Sunbright assisted to lay down are being kept fully alive at Coombe Park, for it stands deep in fields, sheltered by oak and larch and holly, and in each field you will find brood-mares and foals bred from winning strains, all of which are good to look upon.

Nor has Mr. Howard's keen judgment of the thoroughbred been misplaced in the purchase of Sunny Trace as lord of the harem. This dark bay, compact, well-coupled son of Abbot's Trace, is out of that sterling mare Sunny Moya, dam of Abbot's Smile and the Macnab, which claimed Sunstar as a sire and the Oaks winner Cherimoya as a dam. And from Cherimoya descend Una Cameron, dam of the Derby winner Cameronian; no stouter running blood could be found in the whole *Stud Book*. Indeed, Sunny Trace amply proved this assertion, for he won eleven races and beat and gave weight away to some of the best of his age and sex. Now at stud the handsome bay has let down into a very taking stallion, with

the best of limbs, and a good middle piece, and good to follow in every way. He is what the old-time breeders used to term "a horse with two good ends." Nor will it be long before his worth will be more publicly recognized, if one may judge his first crop of foals at Coombe Park. Sunny Trace is one of those stallions which bequeath conformation to all his stock. Bone is inherited, too, and there are few pastures which assist the making of bone to such an extent as those of Coombe Park. And by bone, I would not have you imagine the soft porous kind we so often see, but rather the strong, solid sort which does so much to act as a shock absorber under all conditions.

Lady James Douglas has one of the best-equipped studs in the country at Harwood, near Newbury, and her manager, Major Claude Booth, always gives me a hearty welcome whenever I go there. Many are the talks we have had on both thoroughbred breeding and foxhunting, for Major Booth in the winter acts as an amateur whipper-in to that sporting pack, The Vine. And would not the heart of any horse-lover rejoice to see the lovely lines of that truly great sire Gainsborough, who has done such yeoman service for the thoroughbred? I have often been one of a levee when he has held court in his stallion-yard or his box which is decorated with Lady James's racing colours while the tablet over the manger testifies to the fact that this wonderful son of Bayardo was the last triple crown winner, although owing to the War all the classic events were run at Newmarket. One cannot say too much in praise of Gainsborough except that he is fit for any light-horse purpose, a statement which one could not make about very many stallions, and moreover, possesses a sterling pedigree.

I remember once spending an afternoon at Harwood with Mr. Alec Taylor, who told me that his ex-head-lad's wife had had twenty-two children and lived to a great age. Thereupon Major Booth exclaimed, "What, twenty-two, wonderful! If I was a woman I wouldn't like to have one!" which Mr. Taylor countered with, "Ah, but then you see you are not a woman, women look upon these things in a vastly different light!" Incidentally, we were looking at that particular time at some brood-mares in a paddock which may, or may not, add point to the story!! It depends which way you look at it. All the paddocks at the Harwood Stud are, by the way, named after racecourses, and Brown, the stud-groom does not say, "Oh, that mare is in the north paddock," but simply, "She's in Sandown, or Ascot, or Gatwick" as the case may be.

Just across the road from the Harwood Stud lies the newly

established Woodhay Stud, which is managed by that very knowledgeable judge of bloodstock, Major C. H. Lloyd, who has Rameses the Second, one of Gainsborough's best sons, at stud there, which I think should make up into a really useful stallion. The stud is well equipped with good paddocks, and there is plenty of energy and will-to-win there too. After all, is this not nine-tenths of the success of any stud be it great or small ?

CHAPTER XIII
THE EXPORT TRADE

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THE foundations on which the English thoroughbred were built are very old. As far back as 1565 Thomas Blundeville of Newton Flotman, Norfolk, wrote : " Some men have a breed of Great Horses meete for warre and to serve in the field. Others have ambling horses, of mean stature for to journey and travel by the waie. Some again have a race of swift runners to run for wagers or to gallop the buck." The race of swift runners in combination with the Arab, Barb and Turk, became in the seventeenth century the English " bred " horse or thoroughbred.

Almost two hundred years ago Ireland, through the enterprise of Sir Edward O'Brien, Lord Antrim, Lord Portmore and, a little later, Sir Marmaduke Wyville, imported several English thoroughbred sires and some mares. Virginia, Carolina and Maryland followed suit. Then France, Germany and Russia drew largely on England for supplies, and in 1823 we sent the first thoroughbred to our young colony of New South Wales. This was Steel Trap, a chestnut horse, by Scud out of Prophetess, by Sorcerer.

Ireland has never had a Stud Book. All thoroughbreds born or raised in the country enjoy the same privilege of registration in *The General (English) Stud Book* as do thoroughbreds born and raised in Great Britain, the home of the race. Thus, although Ireland in the last two hundred years has constantly drawn on this country for breeding material these units do not come under the heading of exported stock, since the offspring therefrom are registered in the *General Stud Book*, owned and published originally by the house of Weatherby ; and now by the English Jockey Club.

The outgoing stream of thoroughbreds to other lands, including our original Colonies, the forerunners of a vast State and great Dominions, has steadily increased in volume. In three years there were exports, all classes, as follows : Singapore 118, Federated Malay States 54, Straits Settlements 5, Trinidad 37, Burma 16, Panama 67, Mauritius 50, Java 16, Barbados and British West Indies 20, Greece and Cyprus 37, Portugal 9, Roumania 8, and Czechoslovakia 7.

The United States and France are our best customers, and India

is a large buyer. New Zealand and Canada never have been very large purchasers, but New Zealand has made the most of her opportunities when selecting her renewals. For these renewals all countries must return to the fountain head at periodic intervals. Australia and New Zealand have so fully recognized that principle, that now all the leading sires in both countries were imported from the homeland. They include Night Raid, by Radium ; Magpie (second in the Two Thousand Guineas to Gainsborough), by Dark Ronald ; Spearhead, by Spearmint ; Rossendale, by St. Frusquin ; Limond, by Desmond ; Seremond, by Desmond ; Treclare, by Tredennis ; High Force, by Tracery ; Lord Quex, by Lemberg ; Chief Ruler, by The Tetrarch ; Tea Tray, by The Tetrarch ; Paper Money (third in the Derby), by Greenback ; and Hunting Song, by Hurry On.

Night Raid—an unsuccessful two-year-old selling-plater—was one of the most lowly in point of racing class of this batch of exportations. In this country he would not have been considered worth sending to the stud. Nevertheless, his breeding is good. By Radium, he is out of Sentiment, by Spearmint out of Flair, by St. Frusquin out of Glare, the dam of the winners Lady Lightfoot £760, Flair £9,384, Lesbia £12,716, Romeo £1,882, Halos £350, and granddam of Prince Palatine. Condovery, a good racehorse, and the sire of Xandover, is almost full brother in blood to Night Raid. He is son of Radium from Moonfleet, by John o' Gaunt out of Lesbia, full sister to Flair.

Mr. John McGuigan only paid 120 guineas for Night Raid at the December Sales of 1920, and sent him out to Mr. P. Keith at Sydney. There Night Raid won a small race and ran a dead-heat for another. He broke down shortly afterwards and was sold to the New Zealand breeder, Mr. A. F. Roberts. In his first season at Mr. Roberts's stud he got Night-march, winner of the New Zealand Derby, and in his second season one of his offspring was the hardy campaigner Phar Lap.

This big, raking gelding only cost 160 guineas as a yearling. His dam, Entreaty, then a seven-year-old, is by Winkie out of Prayer Wheel, by Pilgrim's Progress out of Catherine Wheel, by Maxim (son of exported Musket) out of exported Miss Kate. Winkie, an own brother to Winkipop, ran unplaced at two and three years old. In 1915 Lord Astor put him up for sale, and Mr. J. Reid, who bought him for 100 guineas, sent him to New Zealand. Pilgrim's Progress, by Isonomy out of Pilgrimage, was an own brother to Mecca. He never ran, and in 1902 the Duchess of Montrose sold him to Mr. McCulloch for 410 guineas. He, too, was sent to New Zealand.

There was nothing to suggest that these ancestors of Phar Lap

possessed the qualifications to enter into the pedigree of a horse of phenomenal racing merit, other than that they were highly bred, and were raised in England. Musket was on a much higher plane, and demonstrated that he possessed a full measure of stamina. The strange fact, however, remains that whilst he was far from an asset at the stud in this country, he proved of great value to equine eugenics in New Zealand and Australia, and sired Carbine from the exported mare Mersey.

Of late years there has been little opportunity for testing on English courses the products of Australasia. Strephon II's utter failure to uphold his Australian reputation is well within recollection. Thirty years ago Australian horses and mares in Merman, Grafters, Newhaven II, Australian Star, Uniform, Maluma and Georgic won good-class handicaps in England, and Merman also was good enough to carry off the Ascot and Jockey Club Cups. But at that time Australian horses were more successful on the neutral battle-grounds of India than in these days. Here the British thoroughbred is now supreme. And exports for racing have a great vogue in Ceylon and other Far Eastern countries.

South Africa and India were the largest importers of horses in training last year, the approximate figures (extracted from the *Racing Calendar*) being respectively 61 and 73. About the only horse sent to Australia in 1931 was The Bastard, by Spion Kop out of Valescure. Financial stringency was accountable for this condition of affairs. It is, at the same time, worth recording that in the thirty years (1867-97) Australia only imported twenty-seven horses and very few mares. At the close of this period the first of St. Simon exports were landed. As individuals they were not of much account here, but they were highly successful in Australia.

In the 'seventies Gang Forward, who dead-heated with Kaiser for second place to Doncaster in the Derby, was sent out together with Chandos, and somewhat earlier the St. Leger winner Hawthornden was exported. Hawthornden made no impress on Colonial stock, and Gang Forward, a son of Stockwell, died out there about forty years ago. Other good-class horses imported at this period were The Marquis and Tim Whiffler.

Canada, compared with her southern neighbour the United States, has indifferent facilities for the production of bloodstock. The long, severe winters are all against her, and as her courses are round—dirt-tracks after the American pattern—it is usual for a large proportion of the Canadian events to be contested by horses on summer

circuit from southern winter quarters. In view of these circumstances Canada's endeavour to breed her own bloodstock is most praiseworthy. The class of imports is very largely governed by the price, and time was when any equine outcast was thought good enough for Canada. Considerably fewer in this category will be found in the Canadian export list in the last ten or fifteen years than at an earlier date.

In the Colonial days of 1747 the first thoroughbred, the North-country racehorse Roger of the Vale, was landed in Virginia. He was the forerunner of many good-class importations both in pre- and post-Revolutionary times. Per head America has paid considerably higher figures for her bloodstock than has either Australia or New Zealand, and the aggregate number imported has been larger (covering a like period) in the case of the United States.

In these circumstances Australasia may well feel proud that their champion, Phar Lap, was equal to giving the American Derby winner, Reveille Boy, a four-year-old, eleven pounds, at Agua Caliente, Mexico, and defeat him by two lengths over ten furlongs. Yet in this connection it is vital to remember that notwithstanding her weight of imports, America has clung to many of her native female tap roots. Some of these occur in Reveille Boy's pedigree. Thus, Phar Lap, a thoroughbred, was meeting a horse not of pure English ancestry. They were better and purer bred horses in the United States than Reveille Boy !

CHAPTER XIV

SOME FAMOUS SHOW-HUNTERS

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IS a horse which goes on winning prizes summer after summer in the show-ring necessarily a good one? That he is a sound one, we know from his show career, but whether he is a good horse for the purpose for which he has been bred, namely, hunting, is quite another matter. One cannot say that of every show-ring winner, any more than one can that "all men are liars," but I think odds might be laid that many hunters which have triumphed at Olympia and Richmond and the Royal have been worth very little with hounds. After all, why condemn the show-hunter? Ever since foalhood days it has been coddled and nurtured and fitted for this task in front of it. If the show-hunter has seen hounds, then it is generally only at the meet, or on the roads; its mission in life is something more important than following the "indefinable in pursuit of the uneatable"; and few indeed would risk a valuable show-hunter, whose value may be well over four figures, across country when it may get some of those honourable scars known as "trademarks" but which spell ruin in the show-arena.

But the show-hunter is something more: a rich man's method of expressing his horse-love, or the best advertisement for the dealer, or the perquisite of some woman whose figure looks well in a blue habit. Oh, no! the show-hunter fulfils a much more important task than any of these, because it provides a lesson to many breeders, who can see whenever they visit a show the type of hunter which is being bred and, perhaps most important of all, the type to breed. Many a breeder must have come home from a show with a mental picture of John Peel III, Middleton or Hecland firmly imprinted upon his mind, and with the added determination to breed animals which would compare with this illustrious trio. But does this serve any useful purpose? I think we can find ample proof that utility can be found in any hunter-class at most of the important shows; because within my recollection the hunter-classes have become more level and there is not a great deal to choose between many of the hunters at any of the leading shows, except perhaps they are showing more thoroughbred blood and attributes than did the

hunters of half a century ago when short tails, hogged manes, and "heads like ladies maids and behinds like cooks" were nearly always in force.

We have travelled far since those days, both in a more exact science of breeding and better hygienic methods of stable-management. Within the last forty years there is no doubt that many great horses have taken prizes in the show-ring, but whether the hunters of the last century were as good as those of to-day is an open question. Maybe the older generation will state with hearty emphasis that Broadwood, Blackthorn and Whiskey were immeasurably superior to the champions of to-day; but I who have seen them all am not quite so sure in my own mind, because in the last generation horses stood out more, and some of them dwarfed the classes in which they were shown, whereas to-day there are few outstanding horses, and class after class is level, good and full of quality, a sure index finger pointing to the fact that hunter-breeding has improved vastly, let the pessimists say what they will. But even if this is so we shall not be privileged to look upon such a model hunter as Blackthorn—champion of three countries, who was built upon thoroughbred lines and a very fine mover, or such a quality horse as Bertram, who was quite up to 13 st. 7 lbs. and who was sold at Peterborough for £1,000, a record price for a hunter in those days. And then I well recall Pioneer, a beautiful grey horse, up to 15 st., owned by Mr. Baring Bingham and ridden by the late Jack Goodwin—whose symmetry was very nearly perfect for a weight-carrying hunter.

Much as I used to like Pioneer in the old days my heart always went out and my pulses beat quicker when I used to watch with envious eyes Capt. T. Hobbs, winning championships on that beautiful brown horse Broadwood, who won the championship right out when the Royal Show was at Newcastle, I think, in 1908. This was a horse which was full of quality, carried himself well, and could gallop on in the right style, though he sometimes gave me the impression that he pulled very hard, as indeed did another famous show horse Whiskey, a slashing bay which won all over England for several years. I do not know what Whiskey was like with hounds, but he always struck me as disliking company, although I have been told that he was an excellent performer when out by himself. Although he was not quite up to the same weight as Whiskey, there is no doubt that Red Cloud stood out by himself as a show-hunter at the beginning of this century. With a 13 st. man on his back Red Cloud was the only four-year-old which was ever shown and never beaten,



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SHOW-RING HUNTERS

and he won all over at Olympia, Richmond, the Royal, and in Dublin. Capt. T. Hobbs, on behalf of the late Mr. W. H. Stokes—one of the finest judges of a hunter who ever lived—refused £1,500 for him after he had won the championship at Ballsbridge. I believe that Red Cloud was ultimately sold for £1,050, and even at this staggering figure, for Great Britain had not gone off the gold standard in those days, he was well worth the money, as he was probably the best show-hunter which ever received a rosette.

Quite a different type was Goldfinder, but who was not quite so consistent in his show record as Red Cloud ; and then there was Tennis Ball, a beautiful mover in all his paces, who with his docked tail and strong quarters used to bound off the ground like his namesake. This was an old-fashioned stamp of hunter that was hard indeed to fault, as was the much more famous horse Jorrocks, a well-built bay up to any weight, who in one season was shown eighteen times and won seventeen first prizes. It is well worth recording that this free-moving horse with glorious shoulders that won eleven championships was an exceptional hunter with hounds and an excellent hack. In a word, Jorrocks was one of those horses which are foaled every now and then ; which have balance and performance, looks and conformation ; which seem to possess all the qualities and none of the faults to which horses are heir.

I do not think we have such a good horse as Jorrocks now ; and in my opinion he was better than Home Rule, which was a worthy winner in the show-ring, and was possibly good enough to win the Grand National had he ever been trained for that event.

These were some of the giants of the past and if it were possible it would be interesting to compare them with the winners of to-day, although, unfortunately, this could only be done by means of personal recollection and with the aid of photographs. But then again, unfortunately, a photograph would not show you Handley Cross in all the glory of his free-striding movement, with his strong hocks flexed underneath him, and his shoulders raking right back into the saddle. In my opinion Handley Cross is one of the outstanding horses of our own day ; and as all the world knows Lord Hillingdon sold him to Lady Helen McCalmont for £1,000, and a right good investment the son of Marshal Ney has been, for I believe he won nearly £900 in prize-money. With that good horseman Mr. John Young as his pilot Handley Cross was practically unbeatable ; and if it is possible to compare him with another horse then I do not think that there was much to choose between Hecland and this good-moving chestnut.

And these are only some of the bays and browns and chestnuts which have held sway for a while upon the tan of Olympia, around the green sward at Richmond, and in the white-post ring at Dublin. Even in the mechanical age their names will not likely be forgotten.

For in spite of man's need
For excitement and speed,
There is room for the old horse yet.

CHAPTER XV
LIGHT HORSE BREEDING

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LIGHT HORSE BREEDING

IT is certainly a fact that the various breeds of British horses and ponies were never better than they are to-day. Owing almost entirely to the efforts of the breed societies a wonderful pitch of perfection has been reached by those breeders who have worked on sound lines, and have not been carried away by fads and fancies. I am not concerned in this book with heavy horses, but as a mere observer of what has been done during the last two decades I may record an opinion to the effect that all-round improvement has been steady and continuous. As regards thoroughbreds I think the same may be said; but here again it is not within my province to discuss the present status of racehorses, and so pass on to the light horse, other than thoroughbred, the list including the hunter, the hackney, the polo pony, the native pony, and the rank and file of light horses.

These latter are frequently of nondescript origin, but even at the present day supply the needs of the Army, and who form about nine-tenths of the equine "field" in every hunt, and do all the harness work to be found in the country. And at once we are confronted with the vexed question which has been uppermost for something like fifteen or twenty years, viz., that for scores of jobs the horse is no longer required. Most important of the work of the horse (and which has declined in the greatest degree) is the ordinary carriage-driving of the country, which has been almost entirely superseded by the motor-car. Time was, and not so many years ago, when carriages were driven by all who could afford them, and for this purpose the general utility horse was chiefly used. Some carriage-owners were very particular as to what they drove and liked horses with good action and so forth. The hackney was in great request for victorias and broughams, more particularly in London, but bigger horses were requisitioned for heavy carriages, such as the landau, barouche and brake. Cleveland Bays and Yorkshire coach horses—now formed into one society, though the two breeds have distinctive features—were requisitioned for state coaches and to pull very heavy carriages, but the average owner of carriage-horses bought those which

suited him. Thus great numbers of hunters were driven in the summer-time, while others, probably a greater number, began their life as hunters and ended up by doing carriage-work. Then, too, until motors came, all the tradesmen's carts were horses, and this meant that an enormous number of horses and cobs were required every year. Lastly, there were the cabs and omnibuses which were to be found not only in London and other big towns, but all over the country, and which have been replaced by taxis and the motor omnibus.

It will, then, be readily understood that the demand for horses has sunk to infinitesimal proportions. We still have the Army buyers, but their requirements in times of peace are very small, only a few thousands being purchased every year. We also have the hunting field, and here the demand is probably as good as ever it was, but it is not a really great demand. It has been estimated that there are, speaking very broadly, not more than 100,000 working hunters in the kingdom at any given time, and that perhaps another twenty or thirty thousand are occasionally hunted, but are not kept for hunting alone. With regard to harness horses it is very difficult to give an approximate idea of the requirements of the country. A small number of people still use carriages; even coaching and four-in-hand driving has not entirely disappeared. There are still a few horse-owners who prefer high-stepping hackneys and hackney ponies to the car, and there are also tradesmen who will send their goods about in horse-drawn vehicles, most of all those engaged in the distribution of milk.

Lastly, there are the hill farmers whose farms are not easily reached by the motor-car, and who are to be found in many parts of the kingdom. But when carefully considered the number of horse-users of every description has declined enormously, and as a natural sequence horse-breeding, and especially the breeding of light horses, has followed suit. There is, as a matter of course, the breeding-stock of stallions, brood-mares, foals, yearlings, two-year-olds, and other young horses who have not yet begun their working career. But the fact remains that the number of horses and ponies in the country shows a steady decline, and breeders almost everywhere have great difficulty in disposing of their misfits. I hardly like the word "misfit" in connection with horse-breeding, but it has been made plain in the past that when horses of no fixed breed are mated there is always a chance that the produce may be a nondescript animal, showing all the faults of his parents with few of their good points. It is all very well to have blood on one side of the horse, but there should be blood as

far as possible on both sides, and what it comes to at the present day is that all breeders of light horses should, as far as possible, specialize.

Haphazard mating—though at odd times successful—should be avoided, and the great maxim of “like to like” be steadfastly borne in mind. There are, it need hardly be said, many throwbacks in indiscriminate horse-breeding, and I imagine that the throwbacks to some bad conformation or to some fault or temper are commoner than the reproduction of some especially good point. The fact is that light horse breeding on chance lines is simply a lottery, and in this connection I always think of a mare who in four years produced four animals to the same horse with results that were simply astounding. The mare had been bought from a tradesman who worked her in a light cart. She stood exactly fifteen hands and showed some traces of breeding. Her buyer owned a pack of foot harriers, and he bought the mare, with a view to exercising his hounds, and used her for several years as a hack. She jumped well over a high fence or timber, but had little idea of extending herself where there was a ditch. After several seasons of work she was put to a premium horse, and bred a magnificent hunter, who carried a heavy man in the first flight for ten seasons. This horse was so hard that in a great afternoon hunt he wore out half a dozen second horses, and trotted home with his ears pricked. Put again to the same horse the mare bred another big one, but this one was a wretched brute, never worth more than a ten-pound note. He had no bone, was always ailing, knocked himself about when made to trot, and at five years old was sold for a few pounds to run in a cart which carried yeast about the country. The third result of the same cross was a very plain but strongly-built cob, who never reached fifteen hands, and who fetched £15 at auction when five years old. The fourth of the issue was a filly of fair size, but so weak that she fell down on the road when being ridden quite slowly. Indeed, her breaker remarked that she could only stand up when she had something to lean against. The mare herself was now sold to a neighbour and, mated with a cart-horse, bred a better animal than her previous three.

The results of those breeders who concentrate their efforts towards breeding horses of one particular type have for some years been most satisfactory. That is plainly evident from what is seen at the principal shows, and I have the young stock in mind as well as the mares and stallions. The hackney has been bred in a great degree for action, and I am inclined to think action of the kind that hackney men desire was never better than it is at the present day. In polo-pony breeding

great strides have been made, more particularly with the dams which had been good playing ponies in their day. In hunter-breeding, too, the advance has been of a marked description, and this is due to the fact that more breeders are conducting their operations on stud-book lines everywhere. Thus, it is fairly well established that careful breeding pays best. But careful analysis of any show catalogue reveals the fact that a big majority of the young stock which were not entered in either of the Stud Books failed to reach the premium list. There is, therefore, every encouragement to go on breeding from the stud-book mares, and there is further evidence of the success of this sort of breeding to be found in the list of winners in the saddle classes, for a stud-book bred animal was fourth in the four-year-old class, a stud-book five-year-old gelding was first in the lightweight class, while another five-year-old gelding was fifth in the same class. All the other winners had been bred in England except two, which were bred in Ireland, and this reminds me that light horse breeding—according to my information—is gradually recovering in Ireland, and as so many Irish farmers are horse-lovers, I think we may take it that the supply from the Free State is likely to increase.

It has frequently been pointed out that the future of light horse breeding must now depend almost entirely on those who wish to use the light horse for their own purpose. The farmer who specializes, and the farmer who is a follower of hounds, will go on breeding a few as they have done in the past, but the small farmer who likes to breed a horse or two is turning his attention to horses he can work on his farm, or giving up horse-breeding in favour of cattle. He can hardly be expected to go on breeding in the face of such a limited market as there is now, and therefore, though there are enough horses at the moment to meet the demand, the number bred will continue to decrease, and a time will probably come when there will be a scarcity, and this means that prices will rise greatly. To meet the coming shortage there is one fairly simple way, and that is for hunting people and others who wish to use the horse to breed horses for themselves. I have mentioned this so often that I am very nearly tired of writing it, but I know that what I have written in the past has borne some good fruit, and by repeating my advice I may possibly do more good to breeding. What I chiefly advocate is the keeping of all good hunter mares, of retiring them before they are too old, and where the owner has no land, of finding a place where they can be kept for breeding purposes. There are at the present day associations in certain hunts which to a great extent look after the hunter-

breeding. There should be such a society in every hunt, except perhaps in the very small ones, and it should chiefly concern itself with brood mares.

Every useful hunter mare is known where it is hunted, and no mare of value should be allowed to leave the country. The association, if powerful enough, should rent a farm, if suitable land can be found, and if funds do not allow of this being done it should enter into arrangements with farmers with a view to the mares being kept—in the case of the owner being a townsman and unable to take any part in the breeding. For individuals to breed on their own account is probably the best plan, but where this is impossible co-operation—on a large or small scale, according to circumstances—appears to be an alternative which could well be adopted in many hunting districts.

But surely the farmer will not readily or willingly abandon the breeding of horses as part of his plan in the management of his farm. Recent years have proved his adherence to the horse, not, as might be imagined by some, because of dislike of change, but entirely on account of his love of the horse, supported by a belief that his well-tried friend can never be superseded entirely on farm, field or street. Specialization in the breeding of certain classes of horses may be restricted by changing markets and values, but the shrewd lover of the horse will endeavour to ascertain the requirements of the buyers and to adapt his methods to attract the best customers.

The average farmer is predisposed towards the breeds and types he works on his land. There was a time when it was common for a farmer on a considerable scale to breed and keep his hunter, as well as his cob or hack. Either or both of them fitted in well with his normal and primary business, in that he could usually sell a saddle or harness horse of attractive merit to advantage.

If he bred the animal, or bought him young, he would break and train him, and thus enhance his market value, for the more generous buyers preferred the animal already broken to saddle and harness, and perhaps appraised his qualities as definitely by his docility and manners as by breeding, action and conformation. But the heavy cart-horse predominated on the farm as a supplementary as well as an animal of immediate utility. The individual farmer might have his pronounced breed preference, or he may have been influenced in his choice by a study of the market, but he would breed Shire, Suffolk Punch, Clydesdale, or, latterly, Percheron, according to some adequate determining consideration.

Heavy horses have been severely affected in popularity and value

by mechanical opposition, especially on the roads. Modern invention has assailed them with success on the streets also, but it is for short-distance work that the horse excels in convenience and economy. The motor-lorry wins where distance has to be covered, but the horse is correspondingly superior where frequent stopping is part of the daily round. For this reason horses are still required on the streets by the great carrying and trading organizations and private companies.

It is not easy to say definitely whether or not the one form of traction is gaining on the other, but supporters of the horse decline to believe that motor-power is to extend its ground in town-work.

They hold that if it is to advance further upon the former stronghold of the horse, it will be in disregard of marked economic influences, and with their understanding of keen trading competition, they cannot make themselves believe that the decree of hard economic facts can long be subordinated to less pressing preferences or fancies. The breeding of heavy horses will continue as long as farming remains an industry of importance in this country, but it will have to be adjusted in dimensions and types to harmonize with the fluctuating needs of the times.

The high prices of a generation ago for cart-horses have probably gone for ever, but on a more modest scale there will be a demand for horses for collar-work on and off the farm. The tractor has long menaced the horse on the land, as the motor-lorry has done on the road, but here again the one power is largely complementary of the other rather than a definite competitor.

For obvious reasons it might be claimed that the future of horse-breeding for the farmer lies mainly in saddle-horses. Modern invention has failed so far to carry opposition, or even its menace, into the hunting-field or on to the turf. Devotees of mechanical contrivances and the sport or excitement they offer, have devised means of gratifying their preferences, but the thoroughbred and the hunter remain in exclusive possession of their age-old respective spheres of activity. This monopoly of the turf or field is not in the least likely to be disturbed or threatened seriously by mechanical invention. The first attacks have been effectively defied, and with increasing knowledge of the merits of the horse in sport the animal need have nothing to fear from the encroachments of the machine.

The question for the farmer is how far he can adapt himself, and his methods, to produce the class of animal these lucrative markets demand. The thoroughbred is beyond the pretensions of the average farmer, and the breeding of racehorses can be left to those in a

position to turn the business to a profitable account. The hunter, of which great numbers are required, comes well within the domain of farming. The man who succeeds in placing high-class hunters on the market can be assured of plenty of buyers at good prices. In fact, nothing he can produce will pay better.

The return may be slow in coming, but most things in farming proceed slowly, and are incapable of being hastened by human or artificial means. The horse reproduces tardily and sometimes without certainty, but so long as the best type of hunter sells at anything like present value, it would be well worth while for the farmer to consider carefully the possibility of extending or supplementing his normal procedure by catering in some degree for a market that is unlikely ever to fail him.

CHAPTER XVI
HORSE SHOWS

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HORSE SHOWS

MEMORY plays strange pranks with us sometimes, and as I took pen in hand to write this chapter it suddenly carried me back to the first show I was ever at, and to some of the incidents which took place there. I was only a child, and I was to be taken to the show as a treat. I was taken into the luncheon tent and was quite awed with the many decorations, for which, however, I failed to see the necessity. My friends were amongst the exhibitors, and there had been much talk of horses and prizes during the preceding days, but when we proceeded to the stands to see the horses we found, much to our disgust, that we had not taken a prize, and I remember feeling that our horse, which was a favourite at home, was quite as good as anything at the show. When I look back into the past and the events of the day it occurs to me that there must be many visitors to shows in these days who are in even a worse predicament than I was then—I could sit on a pony by help of the bridle—and it is to these I would offer a little assistance.

It is unnecessary to insist that visitors to shows vary greatly. There is the expert with whom I have nothing to do here ; there is the man or boy who thinks he knows it all, and who does not know anything ; and there is the man or boy who knows little or nothing, but who wants to know. As I wrote the last sentence an experience of my own was brought to my memory. I was at an important show and was very busy, and as I hastened along the ringside to get to the other ring I came across an acquaintance, who looked very puzzled. " Was that right ? " he asked, referring to a decision which had just been given. I told him that in my opinion it was. " But," he protested, " I cannot see any difference between them." I got him to come out with me, and showed him as well as I could what were the points which had influenced the judges.

And there the matter did not end, for within a few years that gentleman was a prominent breeder and exhibitor of hackneys. I could tell of many similar instances : one, of a tradesman who, when he could afford it, began to ride the lanes on a hack. No one seemed to notice him much ; he was one of the crowd, till one fine day he

appeared on a hunter, and unostentatiously took his place in the first flight and kept there.

There are many people who visit our shows occasionally who would have some difficulty in giving a categorical reason for their visits. They know nothing about horses, and if it is suggested that there are the "exhibition" classes—such as jumping and driving—this does not account for their attendance at shows where these classes take a very secondary place; nor for their being at the ringside in goodly numbers when the breeding classes are before the judges. Some of these visitors are undoubtedly bored, though there are amongst them a goodly proportion who "affect a virtue, if they have it not." And of all it may fairly be said that there is latent the instinct which I may perhaps be permitted to call the horseman's instinct. It is true that it may remain latent for all time; it is equally true that it may be suddenly brought to light and that by some quite unexpected event.

Such being the case, it seems only reasonable to give a few hints to those who are, so to speak, "groping in the dark," for they may perhaps put some on the road to knowledge of the subject who would otherwise have never moved. And in this "personally conducted tour" of the showyard I would point out that it is the interests of the young man that I have in view. If a man gets to know something about the points of a horse, if he gets sufficient insight to be able to follow the judges a little in their work, he is laying up for himself a considerable amount of entertainment in the future, for it is by no means necessary to be a proficient to get a lot of pleasure out of a horse show.

And no boy is too young to begin, though perhaps it may be as well to remind boys, and others as well, that it is advisable not to chatter too much about what they see. He who keeps his eyes open and has not too much to say learns a lot, and he generally gets the respect of the men who know. The best show for a personally conducted tour is undoubtedly the Royal, for there every breed of importance is represented. Beginning with the heavy breeds, we have the Shire, the Clydesdale, the Suffolk, amongst British breeds, and the Percheron, an importation which has come to stay. I am concerned with the light horses, which, for the purposes of this chapter, are hunters and hackneys.

Besides which, when the hunters and hackneys have been fairly mastered the other breeds can be rapidly taken in if required. The novice should first be particular about the legs and feet of the hunter. The bone should be clean and flat, and the sinew well defined; the hoof should be round, and the sole should be elastic. The position

of the knees and hocks is an important matter, but it is one my novice need not trouble himself much about for some time to come, for that great expert Captain Horace M. Hayes says that it is a question which only the experience of a good judge can decide satisfactorily. There is a very ticklish point about the hunter, and that is his height. Most emphatically, it is a drawback if he is on the leg, and the novice cannot be too particular on this point. To ensure himself of coming to a right conclusion on this subject, he should first see that the cannon-bone is short, and that the shoulder is well placed and deep. Then the horse should be fairly wide at the end of the breast, and should have plenty of heart-room, as it is called by horsemen. The back should be level, a hollow back is generally a sign of weakness. The ribs should be well sprung and be well forward, and the quarters should be muscular with the points of the hips well defined and wide apart. The arms and thighs should be muscular.

When the novice comes to look into the action he will find plenty to occupy his attention and a good few things to puzzle him. He had first better devote his attention to the walk ; for if a horse walks well, his action in his other paces will be most of it good. The hunter must have a bold swinging walk ; he must carry his head well up, put his foot well out and get his hocks well under him. In his trot he should move in somewhat similar style, but the snap of the knee should not be in evidence, and his pace in the trot should be slow. In the canter and in the gallop he should lead with the right leg, get his hind-legs well under him as a fulcrum, and should change legs easily, and in an effortless manner, when going a good pace.

The hackney scarcely needs describing even to our novice, for he practically describes himself. When he is standing still the same analysis as suits the hunter will suit him, and this notwithstanding that the result will be so different. But it must be borne in mind that in the hackney as well as in the hunter there is a large preponderance of thoroughbred and Eastern blood. Hence, then, comes quality : the clean, flat bone and well-defined sinew, the well-placed knees and hocks, deep shoulders, good heart-room, well-sprung ribs, and muscular thighs. The hackney is built on different lines to the hunter, it is true, but there is a certain similarity when they are standing still. It is when they begin to trot that the marked differences appear. The hunter must not snap his knee ; the hackney must. He can scarcely have too much knee action provided it is of the right sort. But he must step straight out and must not throw his feet or wind his knees about as is seen sometimes.

CHAPTER XVII

POINT-TO-POINTS : THEIR TRAINING AND WINNING

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IT is asking a good deal of any horse, thoroughbred or not, to carry 12 st. or over, round a strongly fenced country for three and a half miles. This is especially the case when that distance is run at racing speed—and a fast racing gallop differs vastly from hunting proper—against horses which can jump and stay and gallop on.

Yet that is what we ask a point-to-point horse to do at the present time; for a modern point-to-point is for all intents and purposes glorified steeplechasing with colours up, weight-cloths under saddles, snaffled bridles, prepared fences and books of form.

It was different in the old days, when we were taken out upon the morning of the race by the huntsman to a certain point and told to find our best way home. The actual scene of the race, the ultimate battleground, as it were, was a close secret, and there was no walking round the course as there is to-day for the simple reason that no one knew its venue until the day of the great event dawned. Happy days indeed when horses did not require any special preparation! Provided it "was hunting fit" there was no necessity to give the hunter of that time any extra corn ration or increased galloping work, although I have known enthusiastic grooms add a handful of boiled beans to the evening feed about point-to-point time, so that the "boss couldn't say, or wouldn't nothink to complain of when it comes to setting 'im alight."

But to-day a long and careful preparation is necessary if horse and rider are to distinguish themselves in their local point-to-point. There must be many men and women too, who find more joy in winning the Hunt Cup on their own home-trained horse in their own country than in leading in the winner of the Derby or the Grand National. But that desirable object cannot be attained unless both horse and rider are subjected to a test of severe and arduous training.

Let us keep to the horse. As soon as February days dawn the hunter which is to make such a bold show at the point-to-point (which let us suppose has been fixed for the end of March) should be laid aside and not subjected to the ordinary routine of the hunting

stable. If it makes any appearance with hounds, one half-day a week will be quite sufficient, and there should be no unnecessary galloping or jumping. This is surmising of course that the necessary M.F.H. certificate has been obtained, service proof—from an official permit of view—that the horse has been regularly and fairly hunted during the season. You may be called upon to produce the certificate when you weigh-out for the great event, and forewarned is always forearmed. Some masters are very punctilious as regards certificates, while others—but that is another story !

It is an old adage pregnant with truth that more races are won inside the stable than in the field, and you will find it so when training a point-to-point horse. Your desire should be to get flesh on quarters and loins, so that the horse does not come to the post “all ribs and hips,” and the daily ration must be decided upon to achieve this object.

At the outset it will be found that if the horse is a good “doer” it will clean up 14 lb. of oats a day, though some horses will eat more than this, and it is as well to let them if the inside is clean and exercise is regular. The hay ration can with advantage be reduced ; hay is all very well for horses which are doing slow work, but upon animals which are trained for faster work I have always found that it has a neutralizing effect. A small armful may be given with the last feed, but that is enough, and to prevent waste this may be placed in a hay-bag. Linseed mashes should be given once a week to aid digestion and to keep the inside clean, while boiled beans may be added—a couple of handfuls are quite enough—to each feed in the evening. Saturday nights are “mash” nights in the majority of stables, probably because they can act on Sunday, when the horse is not called upon for quite the same amount of exercise, but this is a matter of personal opinion, with the underlying reservation that regularity is the keynote of successful feeding.

As to exercise, two points arise immediately. There is first of all a stupid idea of exercising a horse in clothing, so that it sweats and does not feel the benefit of it in stall or box ; and secondly, there is the folly of giving too much work.

I would personally rather give too little work than too much, for a hunter cannot be changed into a racehorse in a few days. All its life the hunter has been trained to last all day, and now you are endeavouring to key it up for the express purpose of lasting ten minutes. That being the case, it is as well to recollect that it is the long, slow work on road and bridle-path which loosens and supples



POINT TO POINT

muscle and sinew, and gives the appetite which leaves a clean manger after every feed. From six to seven miles a day is good general exercise. Walk, trot, and walk the pace, though see to it that a different route is chosen every day, as far as possible, for horses love fresh scenes and untrodden ways just as they love the company of other horses in their daily work. It is the solitary confinement of boxes for twenty hours of the day that turns so many horses into "rogues" and "jades." There is nothing like fresh air for fitness, and plenty of company to make horses happy and contented. With advantage a good sharp canter may be given once a week, just to keep the horse's "pipes clean," and the length should not exceed a mile at the most. A half-speed gallop is the best pace, and with a hack jumping in during the gallop—say half-way—acts as a suitable form of exercise. Towards the end of preparation it is no bad plan, unless the horse's capabilities as a jumper are abundantly proved, to give it a school over fences in company with another horse. This should help you to correct any jumping faults there may be, and also, which is probably far more important, teach you a lesson or two as regards riding a horse at racing speed, a thing which will be found much harder than merely riding to hounds. What you thought was a good gallop is only child's play when it comes to riding at racing speed, when the wind sings past the ears, the eyes water, and the fences look black and alarming. And now I must stress one point which is very necessary to the health of the point-to-point horse, and that is grooming, or as it is more generally termed "strapping." After daily exercise the horse should be well "strapped" with rubber and body brush for at least two hours—night stains and mud splashes may be removed with a dandy brush. See to it that your groom does not shirk this work, which he will not if he is keen on the horse's chance.

It is the continual daily strapping—in reality massage—that helps to build up the body muscles brought into play and keep them supple. A good strapping is worth a feed of corn at any time, and you may with advantage take a turn at it yourself, for it is a great aid to physical fitness, expanding the chest and loosening the shoulder muscles, besides helping to keep weight down. If at the end of two hours' work you have not a wet shirt, then all I can say is that you have not done the job as it should be done! The blacksmith should be called in to see to the shoes and note that each foot is cut absolutely level, that there is no strain on the coronet cushions, and that none of the shoes pinch.

There is no need for your horses to be shod with racing-plates, though this may be an advantage ; in the majority of cases ordinary hunting shoes are sufficient. But the point-to-point horse should be shod three or four days before the great event, so as to get him accustomed to the " feel " of the new shoes. When the great day arrives do not stint your horse of water or corn, but let him have a good feed four hours before the race, preceded by twenty-four " go downs " (that is, contractions of the throat as he drinks) of water. On the journey there it will be of great advantage to everyone if you have your horse conveyed in a motor horse-box and kept as quiet as possible until the flag falls. Lastly the race itself. You should be there, comfortably dressed, in time, and you should have walked the course, noted the traps, any flags stuck out in fields, soft patches, the best places to jump the fences, and where to win the race if possible. Keep warm, dry and quiet. Your groom will do the same by your horse so the less you fuss about him the better. Do not stand about on wet grass as nothing tires you more. Rather be ready in time, correctly weighed out and with warm feet.

Whatever you do look out for kicking horses at the post. And try to get a good start ! Sometimes everything depends upon this. But—comes the cry " they're off ! " And here you are riding with them, and your horse probably pulling like mad. There is sure to be a rider or two out of control !

Whatever you do now give your horse a chance to see his fences. Pull back and lose a couple of lengths rather than let him be " blinded " by a horse in front. Otherwise there is nothing to be frightened of. Remember Mr. Harry Brown : " Hundreds of falls are caused by riders pulling and messing their horses about when coming into a fence " ; so keep quiet and give your horse enough rein to let him jump out properly. Ride as if hounds were in the next field and you meant to keep top of the hunt.

" Go the nearest way " sounds too obvious for words, but it is extraordinary what a lot of extra ground some people cover and then lose (or win) by a length ! Keep clear of other people, especially anyone who appears to let their horse jump crooked or swerve. Avoid refusers and being " carried out " rounding a bend by someone who cannot hold their horse. Keep on the inside yourself if you possibly can, and have your horse leading with the near leg. You can seldom afford to give away distance, so keep near the leaders.

Put on speed down hill, but save your horse up hill and on bad going. Should he make a mistake, don't hustle him at once into the

place he has lost, but nurse him along till he has regained his wind and his confidence.

If you have a fall and can't hang on to your horse lie still till the others have passed you. If your horse is a stayer do not be afraid of setting the pace. It may frighten off your worst adversaries !

If you think you are winning, do not relax if the crowd is cheering. It is likely that someone is overhauling you fast. Do not flog a horse that is doing his best. It will only probably make him swerve or change his leg. If you come in among the first four, don't dismount until told to do so by a steward. If you cannot get a place, do not ride your horse all out—he will be fresher for his next race. Do nothing unfair. Above all ride for the love of the game and do not be too cast down or bucked by the result of the race—at best it's only twenty minutes of the whole hunting season !

CHAPTER XVIII
BREEDING OF STEEPLECHASERS

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GRAND National winners run tolerably true to type. The majority of them possess all the size and substance that one looks for in a high-class weight-carrying hunter. Their average height is perhaps a little under 16.2 hands. The *multum in parvo* type, which frequently distinguishes itself over the hardles or on "park" steeplechase courses, rarely prevails at Aintree. On the other hand, exceptionally big horses, providing there is not too much daylight beneath them, often do well over the Liverpool country.

Troytown, one of the grandest horses which ever ran for this race, stood a shade over 17 hands and was superbly proportioned. Master Robert was also fully 17 hands, though he did not have the quality or the character of the other. Big feet are usually a characteristic of good Liverpool horses; and nearly always they are especially well off for bone below the knee. Experience has shown that the hunting type rather than the flat-racing type does best at Aintree.

Occasionally a horse from a fashionable racing-stable develops into a Grand National 'chaser, and here one has Double Chance specially in mind. But, generally speaking, the horse most likely to gain the highest honours of steeplechasing is one who is not broken until three or four years old, and it is to be regretted that this type has diminished in numbers since pre-War days.

Until about a dozen years ago it was the custom of many Irish breeders and farmers to keep a few young horses with a view to their future possibilities in steeplechasing. Nobody was more successful in this practice than Mr. J. J. Maher, who reared some of the finest jumpers of their time.

But in due course the owner of the Confey Stud found there was more profit in breeding for the yearling market, and it has to be admitted that he has been astonishingly successful in this direction. His example has been followed far and wide in Ireland, though naturally not with equal success. All went well until some years ago, when prices for yearlings reached their peak. Now they have come tumbling down to such an extent that the majority of the smaller

Irish breeders are finding it difficult to get rid of their yearlings at remunerative rates.

One of the effects of the slump may be to induce Irish farmer-breeders to devote renewed attention to the production of horses for National Hunt racing. Admittedly it is an expensive business to keep a horse back until he is ready for jumping, but they can do it cheaper in Ireland than almost anywhere else.

There is still a good market for horses of this stamp, and the breeder or dealer who can supply a young 'chaser with Grand National possibilities will have little difficulty in finding customers at four figures. At present there is a genuine dearth of high-class 'chasers, and the restoration of activities in this direction in Ireland will do much to remedy the deficiency. They have plenty of the right sort of mares to furnish the necessary article, and no shortage of suitable stallions.

It is not essential that a mare should be thoroughbred to produce a horse of the Grand National type. Mrs. F. St. J. Blacker once had a half-bred mare called Molly, which she hunted for several seasons in England and Ireland, and was never far from the front rank when hounds were running. She sent her to the sire Cliftonhall, and the result was Music Hall, winner of the Grand National. Still, the majority of winners of that race have been from thoroughbred mares.

When the mares possess the Ascetic blood they are well nigh certain to produce something that can jump. Articles published in *The Field* from time to time on the breeding of important steeple-chase winners have shown the immense value of this strain. Troytown and Sergeant Murphy were both out of Ascetic mares, and at an earlier date the blood firmly established itself in National Hunt breeding through the exploits of Cloister, Ascetic's Silver, Drumcree, Hidden Mystery, Aunt May, and other famous performers over the fences. It would be a flagrant injustice to England to suggest that she cannot produce horses of the real Liverpool stamp, though there can be no escaping the fact Ireland has been the breeding- and rearing-ground of the majority of the finest 'chasers of our time. If you look through the records of the Grand National since its resumption after the War you will find that nine of its winners were bred in Ireland as against four in this country.

The first of these four was Poethlyn, which ranks high in the gallery of winners, considering that he was one of the few who have carried 12 st. 7 lb. to victory. Bred in Shropshire by Major Hugh Peel, no horse in his earliest days could have appeared less likely



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to achieve high steeplechasing honours, his breeder having placed it on record that he was a "weak wretch of a foal who had for some time to be held up to suck, and whose legs were for a long time crooked."

Six years elapsed before another English-bred horse prevailed at Aintree, that being Double Chance, bred at the Southcourt Stud, Leighton Buzzard, by the late Mr. Leopold de Rothschild, and hunted with the Middleton in Yorkshire, as a preliminary to his steeplechasing performances. Another English-bred one was Jack Horner, which, sold as a foal out of Mr. John Musker's stud at Thetford, eventually took his turn as one of the Blankney Hunt horses. Then came the gallant Liverpool practitioner Sprig, foaled and reared in Herefordshire.

If ever a horse was bred and reared specifically to win a Grand National it may be said to have been Troytown. Most of the stock of his sire were good jumpers, while his dam, as already noted, was an Ascetic mare. Further, Major T. C. Gerrard, who bred him in County Meath, made no attempt to race him on the flat, and it was not until he was six years old that he made his first effort in public over fences. If more horses were bred on these lines and given ample time to come to maturity we are sure the dearth of good steeplechasers to which I have referred would soon be made good.

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CHAPTER XIX
RIDING TO HOUNDS

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RIDING TO HOUNDS

IT is a well-worn saying that fox-hunting is a science and riding an art. Like driving four horses in hand, the latter seems to be an inherent gift, for many who have ridden to hounds all their lives seem to occupy the same position, in the rear, as season succeeds season. Not that they are not good sportsmen and women, but they do not seem to possess that eye for a country, the grasp of opportunities, and the saving of horseflesh that puts a man or woman into the front rank. One can no more teach anyone to ride to hounds than one can teach the fiddle by ear ; but there are some principles and hints which should be laid down and acted upon by the hunting novice. In the first place, those who would see sport with hounds must possess good nerves. Now nerve is the most curious thing, as I well know. Some seasons ago I knew a man who took up hunting late in life, and for one season he beat us all. Not that he was a first-class horseman, but his nerve was undeniable, and his grasp of a position wonderful. But that was his only season with hounds, for his nerve failed him, and we saw him no more ; in fact I believe he went into the theatrical profession, which I should imagine is a much more dangerous place than the hunting-field. Nor should one expect too much from the hunting-field, or, for that matter, know too much either ; it is far better to assimilate knowledge slowly and quietly than by choking oneself with too much preparatory detail. And it is really surprising how much one learns in the hunting-field of the psychology of human and equine minds, and of the way of the world in the woods, by stream and outside copse, covert and dingle. I never had a day's hunting in my life which did not teach me something, and I have ever regarded the hunting-field as one of the finest training grounds for the English character. Let us, then, examine some of the precepts which make or mar the good rider to hounds.

When cub-hunting has commenced, it can scarcely be said that the riding season has arrived ; for men have not yet begun to harden their hearts and catch hold of their bridles. A good many of us, no doubt, have in our stables a new purchase or two, whose powers and peculiarities we are anxious to find out. We have probably "larked "

these new steeds over a made fence or two ; but we do not know what they will be like in the hunting-field. Will they go at their fences like a bull at a gate ? Shall we be " committed " to all sorts of impossible places directly we turn our horse's head at them ? And will the ill-conditioned brute frighten us to death by taking off anyhow and anywhere, and landing just as luck may chance ? Will he hop gaily over fences two feet high and ditches a foot wide, but pull up like a coward when the ditch on the far side really wants a little steam to get over ? Or, again, will he decline ditches " to him " except in the most leisurely fashion ? Or—but we are almost afraid to indulge in the expectation—will our new purchases, or even one of them, turn out to be all that we could desire—bold, temperate, fast, hardy, and up to two stone more than our weight ? Devoutly do we hope one such beast may belong to us between this and next April—before Christmas, if possible.

Surely confidence is the key to success in the hunting-field. I know many will not agree with me. There are plenty of people who will assert that they do not know what fear is ; that they would be at the tail of the hounds whether mounted on a rocking-horse or a pig ! They will charm the rash horse, or smuggle the sticky one over all sorts of places ; they will calmly pick out some big timber and ride for a fall, in the hope of making their horse a good timber-jumper ; and though the horse be a noted refuser at water, they will face the biggest brook with a light heart and a cutting whip, and having thrown the first over the obstacle will use the second as a sure and certain means of rejoining it on the far side.

There are men who will go wonderfully well on an indifferent horse ; but they would go a great deal better on one in which they have confidence when it comes to jumping. A horse may be a bit strong between the fences ; he may carry his head high or low, or even swing it to such an extent as to hit your foot ; but he may all the same settle down at his jumps and perform in brilliant fashion. You may have every confidence in such a mount, if you have not so far been brought up in the lap of luxury as never to have ridden anything less than a perfect horse. Or, again, you may have every confidence in another of your horses, one that may go very fast at his fences, but at the same time one which covers a good deal of ground, and of whom experience may have taught his rider that he is a trustworthy conveyance. But I repeat that we all go far better on a horse in which we have confidence than when we find ourselves on an animal that is something worse than uncertain at his fences.

Watch the men who are cutting out the work in any fast run in which you may happen to find yourself and see what the horses are doing—if you have time. In that race for place which follows on the departure of the fox, who is generally the first at the fence? Not, as a rule, the man on a horse which generally whips round with a lead. The rider of such an animal would prefer someone to show him the way over a fence or two till his blood is up. Those who skim over the locked gate, or who do not stop to see whether it be locked or not, have something under them that they know will jump timber; while the man who spots the line of willows rides confidently down to them, and the uncertainty they fringe, is not, you may depend upon it, astride of a horse that, in his estimation, is more likely to refuse than not. At hedges and ditches people will take liberties; but timber and water require clean jumping, and though I have been hunting now for a good many years, I do not remember to have seen more than one or two men in a hurry to encounter either timber or water when mounted on a horse that was a notorious failure at the particular obstacle which chanced to come in the way.

Some people never seem to be going fast; they are never in a hurry; you never see them racing their horses at the fences, and you never see them come up against an impossible place. An old friend of mine used to say, on hearing men describe the ramparts and chasms they had encountered in the course of a run: "Dear me! Where do they find these awful places? I never see them." This may have been self-depreciation on my friend's part, yet not wholly so, for one constantly sees one man high in the air while another is taking things comparatively quietly over a very moderate-sized place.

Knowledge of country, of course, accounts for a good deal, but a good eye for country counts for still more; and in nothing is this more exemplified than in point-to-point races. Indecision, I am inclined to think, is the rock upon which most of us split. We will have that place there in front of us; no, there is a better place to the right—and a still better one to the left. We pull the horse out of his stride, communicate our uncertainty to him, lose several lengths, then our head and, not improbably, our seat, and lastly our reins, and have a good run over a splendid country—on foot!

There are events which take place annually in the sporting year which help the novice enormously in perfecting his or her aptitude for crossing a country with the maximum of comfort and the minimum of effort. I refer to those excellent things which are termed Hunter Trials which give so much pleasure to many in the spring of the year.

Although watching the same people and horses, first in the local class, then in the open, and again in the ladies, may not be exhilarating, there is always plenty to be learned and many a lesson will prove of use in the hereafter.

The course, generally, is some half to three-quarters of a mile in length. Almost certainly there will be a piece of timber which has to be jumped cleanly, possibly consisting of a gate or a stile ; there will be one or two stiff fences, perhaps a wall, a gate to open and shut, and if the committee are " modern " of the Weedon school—most certainly an obstacle without wings ; and they will be certain to use all their ingenuity to obtain a water-jump, with what the children call " real water "—the effect of which on horses unaccustomed to the sight of small brooks is where novices should station themselves.

Having selected the course, the organizers will then have to decide whether to hold their trials in the beginning or at the end of the season—always a moot point.

Next, having settled the course and the date, the committee must obtain the entries. These are sure to be very sticky to start with ; a hundred-and-one excuses will be forthcoming, but eventually by " going into the highways and byways and pressing people to come in " on the closing day for entries the secretary's telephone will not cease ringing, and the committee will be faced with the seemingly impossible task of getting everybody round before nightfall. However, lots of the entries will not materialize. There are sure to be many owners who will not face the publicity, and many horses who, not taking to such doings kindly, will eliminate themselves. Only a few people will view the thing seriously and do all in their power to win on " the day ".

What really constitutes a chance to win a hunter trial ? Suitable schooling is, to my mind, the chief essential, and next to that a suitable type of horse—no amount of schooling will make a horse temperamentally unsuited give a good performance in a hunter trial.

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